ANGLICAN CHURCH MUSIC
IN CANTERBURY
1850 - 1900

A Thesis presented in partial
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Literature of Music

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ABBREVIATIONS

C.M.	Church Magazine
C.Q.	Church Quarterly Paper
C.S.	Canterbury Standard
L.T.	Lyttelton Times
NZCN	New Zealand Church News
P.	Press
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
CML	Canterbury Museum Library
CPL	Canterbury Public Library
CUL	Canterbury University Library

NOTE

Throughout the text the abbreviations S. and St. are used according to their orginal usage by high and low churchmen of the period.

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PREFACE

Speaking to members of the Lyttelton Colonists' Society in 1851, John Robert Godley outlined the fortunes of the Canterbury Association, both in London where it originated, and in New Zealand. It had, he noted, followed a pattern typical of many other groups whose idealistic aims were insufficient to keep the formal body from collapse. And although his remarks were concerned specifically with political and economic development, they are so pertinent to the history of local Anglican choirs over the first half century of settlement that they merit quoting in full.

> Amateur organisations, often admirably conducted at first, under pressure of that enthusiasm which gives rise to great undertakings, almost invariably tend to fall off rapidly. The enterprise which at first presented only abstractions becomes complicated with obstacles, difficulties and discontents. Then follow weariness and neglect on the part of those who conduct it and the affair comes to be more and more left to the exclusive management of the paid officials, whose nominal functions are strictly subordinated and who have in fact the pecuniary interest which it was the principle of the Association to be free from.

Thus Godley saw the initial dreams of visionaries forged into a semi-realised state, only to wither as the realities of the true situation gradually dawned. Excitement wanes and despair takes over until a new idea seizes the people's imagination and the cycle begins anew. Only too often it is the partially fulfilled state that emerges as the climax.

In the earliest years of settlement congre-

gational singing was dominant and the choir, made up largely of children, had little independent work: they existed solely to provide a strong lead for those in the pews. Their training took place as a normal part of school activities while for the adults, practices were arranged as evening classes. Music was therefore of the simplest nature, and on the ordinary Sunday, psalms and hymns were generally deemed sufficient. During Godley's own time the choral servics reflected the democratic life of the still young community where music was seen as a necessary recreation and not merely as an enjoyable pastime relegated to odd free moments, an innocent luxury indulged in by the well-to-do.

After 1853 however, the informal spirit submerged as current theories of moral improvement assumed increasing weight. A quality of earnestness began which characterised the whole development of church music in Canterbury. Above all, it made foreign the activity of those singing groups of the Godley period. Some of the earlier ideals remained for a time it is true, notably in efforts to improve the congregation's response, but with increased emphasis laid on the choir, the rise of a separate body was inevitable. Ironically enough, the end product was little different from that which they had discarded and many were the occasions when the cathedral would have a full choral service with the nave empty. Thus in a history of local church music, the outline presented by Godley begins not in 1851 but towards the end of the first decade. The three periods are clearly defined:

1. 1857 - 1869. Choirs grow and establish themselves as an alternative to weak congregational singing.

2. 1869 - 1878. Years of prosperity and success, when choirs emerge victorious over the congregations.

3. 1879 onwards. Decline of the choirs brought on by the dominance of the cathedral.

Such a scheme based entirely on internal organisation has the merit of simplicity. It is also largely artificial. When we admit the controlling factors of all three periods were the growth of experience and population, we are pointing to an external relationship between church choirs and the outside world: the changing political, economic and social factors cannot be left out. The pattern is therefore more complicated as other cycles become superimposed on the original threefold division.

It was noted that a new seriousness accompanied the formation of the choirs. We should not wholly deride this much maligned feature of Victoriana for the new determination made for progress. It was a progress people saw everywhere. Though commercial attitudes had hardly advanced from the early days of the settlement and large scale development was hindered by an uncertain economy, one major difference completely changed the outlook. Christchurch was no longer a small village governed by absentee landlords. Instead, people could point with pride to a provincial capital and Mountfort's buildings paid due homage to the fact.

On this spring tide the choirs began to form.

During the early 'sixties a vision of the cathedral initiated moves more serious than the rather informal ones hitherto attempted. Yet the choir which resulted at St. Michael's in 1863 was a compromise for it looked back at the old Godley period as much as ahead to the future. Ambivilence, the grievous trait of these years, had appeared. It stemmed from the early colonial urge for men to assert their individual rights and equality. With no real leader all attempts were thus made rootless and vulnerable from the outset. Both organists and choirs desired to expand but lacking the experts with knowledge, could only grope their ways uncertainly forward. Progress was short lived and the downfall came gently but firmly as people lost interest. In the midst of the 1865 recession a new more glamourous choir developed at St. John's and as it prospered, so the intrinsic features of the first period became impotent to inspire anything but isolated and reactionary protests.

The 'seventies had the wealth and the leadership which the earlier period lacked. The boom years of 1860 to 1863 were small indeed when compared to the prosperity derived from Vogel's immensely popular and beneficial development schemes. They brought new industry and attitudes to a still very rural and individualistic province. Systematically financed from the central government, the boom enabled the flowering of high Victorian society in Christchurch. But none of this would have been accomplished without a sense of direction and this they had, both from Wellington and the Provincial Chambers where Rolleston was the last and perhaps the greatest of the Sperintendents. At the same time two

pioneering hopes were fulfilled: Canterbury College, the beginnings of a university, was founded in 1873 and the cathedral walls once more grew upwards. From 1870 to 1876 the process of evolvement was so great that Christchurch truly comes of age.

It was in these years that the choirs reached their peak of development. They too shared in the wealth and leadership and consequently were invested with a hitherto absent purpose. During this decade the battle for ascendancy was waged between an increasingly powerful choir structure and the congregations. The years of transformation formed the most progressive and alive period, one characterised by debate in church meetings, [illegible] magazines and newspapers, by the growth of elaborate choral organisations, of surpliced choirs seated in chancels and by a widening gulf between education, and even the community as a whole, and the Church.

But when we look at choir leadership over these years, the seeming plateau of the 'seventies becomes a peak in its own right. Just as there are three stages to the overall cycle there are also individual cycles within the first two periods. Initially, practical ideas are disseminated (1857 - 1862, 1869 - 1872), then a time of steady development, rather short in the previous decade (1863 - 1864), but from 1873 to 1877 filled with hopes for an organisation which would unify and consolidate town and country choirs. Finally there is a decline, inevitable, and in both cases caused through leadership. In the 'sixties they had none; in the 'seventies

perhaps too much. The leadership of Robert Parker, an enthusiastic, young yet experienced Englishman, built up the position of the choir to such a pitch, that when he left in 1878 it was like a liner adrift at sea without engineer or captain.

The final period is a sad conclusion for the last twenty years show only a slight ascent on the graph of progress - and that at the start. A general depression had blanketed everything after 1878. When it started to lift in the mid-'ninties trade and social patterns assumed a modern stance. But where choirs are concerned there was no perceptible breakthrough. The congregational element had abdicated and choirs, now left in the ascendant, largely followed the pattern laid down by the cathedral. Uniformity came in music as a truly diocesan spirit gave a stifling security. The role of the choirs was now fixed and arguments over what and how they should sing belonged to the past. Hence the dulness of this period; as H.G.Wells once said of the late Victorian period in England, it was the "ironical silence that comes after a great controversy." Certainly there was much activity - sheer population numbers and the legacy from the 'seventies saw to that - yet it was an activity without direction. A depressing quality adhered to these years caused by a premature climax in the opening of the Cathedral and the formation of the Diocesan Choral Association. Returning then, to Godley's original statement we see affair lapsing once more into the hands of financiers (the Cathedral Chapter and the D.C.A. Committee) and events seem to follow an uninteresting and inevitable course.

In relation to the last period, the cathedral undoubtedly came too early. Yet at the broader level, in terms of the whole fifty years it was long overdue. Everyone expected the lead to come from that source, but struggling at the end to achieve completion, the aims and hopes were thwarted by tight economics. Instead of providing the climax, the cathedral itself became part of the decline.

The Godley Period
1 a prelude

As always when people are oblivious to future difficulties a bright extroverted spirit enters into their lives; despite the need to create permanent shelter before winter, the honeymoon of those first weeks of settlement tempted men and women to toss away at least some of their inhibitions and act not as London society would demand but as a large heterogeneous camp casually invited.[1]

This general bonhomie extends to the church-going, setting it apart from later periods when the weight of years imparts solemnity. Yet this strange mating of the informal to a dignified and traditional liturgy was not unattractive. Some thirty years after, Henry Jacobs could still conjure up in his mind the novel, not to say exhilerating, experience, the primitive setting casting an almost romantic aura over the whole community.

The upper storey of the Norwich Quay warehouse was chosen as the only place suitable, at once large enough for congregations yet able, through its comparative inconvenience, to be spared from secular use during the week. Barrels, casks and coils of rope were moved to one side to form a central space in the dimly lit attic, church furniture (altar, pews and lectern) was hastily

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1. Fitzgerald and Godley found they could do so without losing their urbanity and became successful leaders; the bishop-designate, Thomas Jackson, failed largely because he could not bridge this gap.

improvised from spare boxes and planks while for access a rough though strong set of stairs replaced the shaky ladder. All was ready for the Sunday when, only six days after the Charlotte Jane and Randolph had anchored, services were held. Jacobs as the senior clergyman, preached to a small number gathered at the early morning communion, returning at ten-thirty for matins.

> Several boatloads of colonists came ashore for /the/ second service and strange it was to see the pink and blue ribbons of the pilgrim mothers and daughters, contrasted with those rough planks and cases, and that dingy cob-webbed lowering roof. Not less marked was the excellent singing and chanting we had at those services.[2]

Today mention of music at an ordinary service would, perhaps, be taken for granted, yet in 1850 the heartiness with which we are told that congregation chanted the whole service[3] speaks in our times of something different. To the Victorian

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2. Henry Jacobs in "Pilgrim" /C.L.Innes/, Canterbury Sketches, Christchurch, 1879, pp.6-7

3. "Dec. 26 We have four clergymen here and three schoolmasters; the latter understand church singing, and consequently we have the whole service chanted beautifully." Extract from a private diary, Canterbury Papers, No.10, p.312 This would include the singing of hymns, psalms and canticles and the intoning of prayers. It is termed a full choral service. "By Choral Service is meant that mode of celebrating the public service by both priest and people, in which they sing all portions allotted to each respectively, so as to make it one continued psalm of praise, confession, and intercession from beginning to end." The Parish Choir, 1846, quoted in Rainbow, Bernarr, The English Choral Revival, 1839 - 1872, London, 1970, p.5

settlers of 1850, familiar with English pattern of worship, their minds might very well have connected it with Tractarian reforms, especially as most of them were aware of the religious circumstances surrounding the colony. The Canterbury Association had many High Church members and since their agent Godley, who was most definitely of that party, unofficially exercised as much control over the settlement's church affairs as a bishop normally would, it is legitimate to ask what these reforms were and the extent of their success.

Tractarian theology under Keble, Pusey and Newman was rigorously academic and God-centred because they saw decayed Evangelical preaching as empty and emotional, the religious foundations no more than a philosophy of secular humanitarianism. Yet the reaction of these Oxonians was also part romantic. By returning to the principles of the Early Church, particularly its sacramental aspect, they allied themselves to the Victorian Gothic revival. They flung out the old order, the three-decker pulpit and gallery choir, restoring instead the chancel, sanctuary and altar to pre-Reformation significance. An all-male surpliced choir sat in the chancel stalls facing each other to provide a model of behaviour the congregation would hopefully acknowledge and follow. Notable attempts during the 'forties by Thomas Oakeley at Margaret Street Chapel and Thomas Helmore at S. Mark's College, Chelsea (the latter established to offset the religious teaching at its rival college the Evangelical Battersea) stressed the importance of unaccompanied singing, putting particular emphasis on polyphonic Tudor compositions for feast days

and plainsong for ordinary Sundays. Since the whole point of the choir was to lead the congregation in singing, much of their work was done in unison, hence the Tractarians' first mark - the corporate nature of their worship. The second, and the one by which they are chiefly remembered today, is the often crude embellishment in their churches and worship, so Victorian and yet so misunderstood by the majority as to earn them the censorious name of "Ritualists".

Under Godley the Lyttelton church showed a moderate Tractarian stand - indeed it would have been strange if it had not. The influence of the Association was strong and men like Edward Ward, Butterfield, Benjamin Mountfort and Jacobs were all of Godley's persuasion: staunch ritualists without inclining to extremes. As the Lyttelton Times was keen to point out in one of its earliest editorials,

> the promoters of Canterbury deemed the performance of the services of the Church /to be/ of public and general interest, equally with the making of roads and bridges....[4]

Godley aimed to place the Church in the centre of people's lives, the focal point of a "religious and high-minded community".[5] Communion was celebrated every week instead of the usual monthly or quarterly observances; matins and evensong were said daily. In the church, the front pews had kneeling boards, candles were placed on the altar and alms bags embossed with crucifixes replaced the more familiar dish. (In 1846 altar candles

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4. L.T., 3.5.1851 5. ibid., 1.3.1851.

and even the plain alms bag were considered "popish".) Though some of the clergy retained their academicals, Jacobs and the Rev. B.W.Dudley, both at Lyttelton, always wore surplice and scarf. Finally, an "attentive and devotional auditory" were recommended the Rev. J.B.Paul's tract, The English Churchman's Guide to the House of Prayer - its object, the "promotion of solemnity and decency in public worship."[6]

But Tractarian ideas had little if any influence on the music. The choral service was rather the product of the prevailing informal atmosphere, serving as a minor form of entertainment and for this purpose several adults from the port would meet on a week-day evening to practise psalm chants and hymns, perhaps breaking off to sing a favourite chorus from Elijah.[7] The whole free and easy attitude is instanced by Butterfield's impromptu Sunday trip to chop wood at Akaroa - and Mrs Godley considered him one of the better leaders.[8]

None of this casualness, however, pertained to the row of small well-disciplined children who sat unsurpliced in front of the congregations in Lyttelton and at the capital.[9] They were learning to sing. Their Battersea trained school-teachers naturally continued to use Hullah's Manual,[10]

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6. Church Minute Book of Lyttelton, 7.12.1851

7. The Journal of Edward Ward, Christchurch, 1951, pp.167,178

8. ibid., p.149; Godley, Charlotte, Letters from Early New Zealand, Christchurch, 1951, p.291

9. L.T., 6.3.1852

10. Hullah, John, Wilhem's Method of teaching

that solfa system which they themselves had been reared on. Yet the choirs' repertoire remained of the simplest character, even at the Temporary Church, later St. Michael's (1861), where they had the support of a small organ - a seven stop Bevington featuring one manual and no pedal board. (Plates 1 and 2) For the older boys at Christ's College the prospectus declared that "vocal music, especially that which will enable /the students/ to take part in worship will be taught to all scholars."[11] It was a scheme adopted by both the Battersea College and S. Mark's since the early 1840s and though there was a disparity in churchmanship, dual parentage need not be rejected; Jackson had had connections with both. Before he became Principal of Battersea, his first parish was the Tractarian one of S. Peter's, Stepney. While there he turned to S. Mark's for aid in the rendering of his services. Shortly after, under the guidence of Helmore's brother, a choir of sixty trebles and forty altos, assisted by some of the masters from the church school, were singing the week-day offices.[12]

From these apparently strong, and from the educational point of view, well-thought-out, foundations we might expect a continuous development. Unfortunately such was not the case. Jackson, who might have made much of the Church and its educa-

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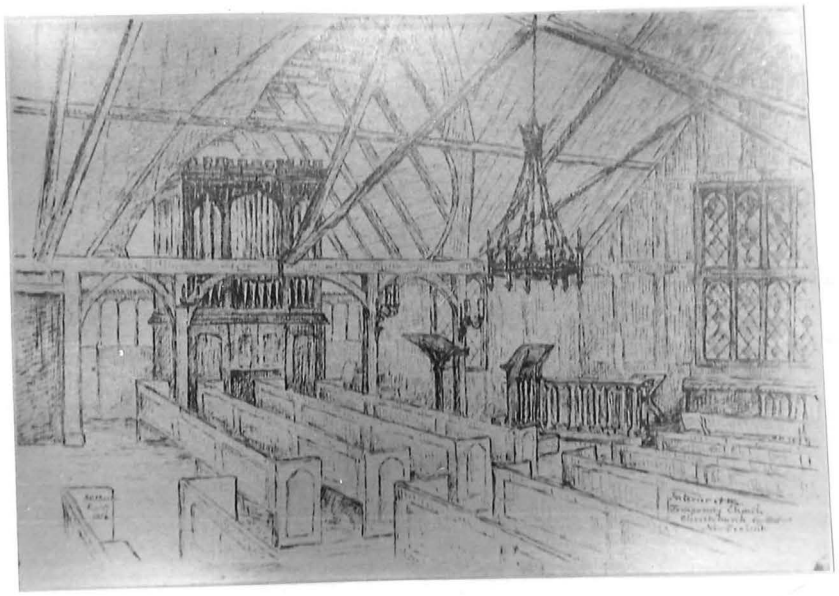
Singing, adapted to English use, London, 1841
Various inventories compiled over the first four years of the settlement reveal that even schools at Kaiapoi, Gebbies Pass and Akaroa had copies - see Appendix A

11. Canterbury Papers, No.4, p.101

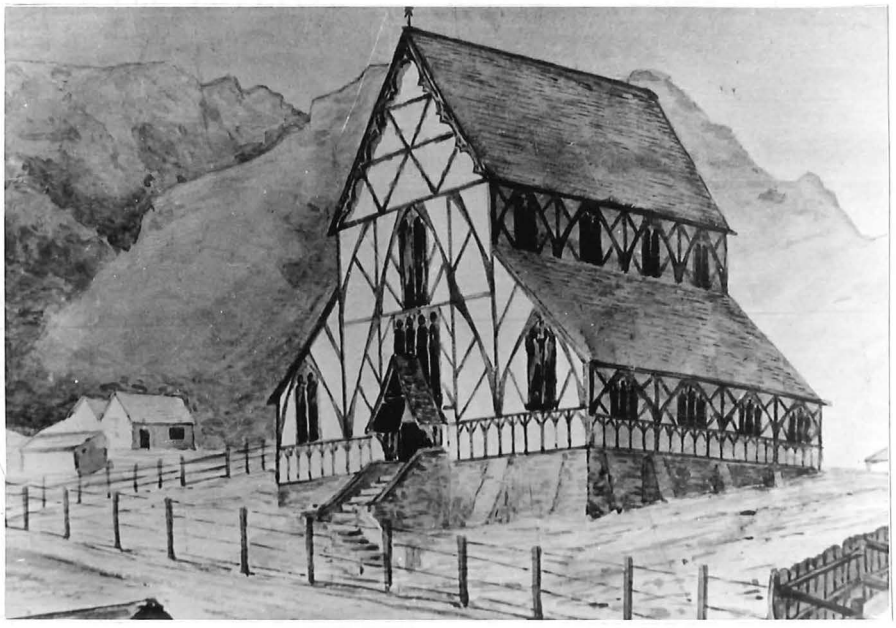
12. Rainbow, op.cit., pp.116-117



Plates 1 & 2: The Temporary Church, Christchurch, dated 27 September, 1854

Plate 3: Lyttelton in 1852

Plate 4: B. W. Mountfort's first Lyttelton Church in 1853



tional facilities,[13] severed all ties with the Association's affairs early in 1851 and Godley, on who the mantle naturally fell, returned home to England twelve months later. As the settlement expanded (Christchurch warranted a full-time news reporter in 1852) and the need for an independent economy arose, so the once intimate atmosphere grew more impersonal.[14] The last great monument was Mountfort's Lyttelton church of 1853. (Plates 3 and 4)

Perched on the steep slopes of the harbour above the present Holy Trinity, its height and location ensured dominence over the whole port. Only four bays were ever built but had the church been completed (the nave alone was anticipated to hold a thousand people) and the steeple added, a veritable cathedral would have cast its paternal shadow over the houses below. Nevertheless, like the whole religious position, its continuing reality was little more than a dream: unexpected shrinkage of structural timbers caused a few roof beams to fall, and out of concern for public safety the building was closed. Services reverted once more to the Immigration Barracks.

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13. Education seems to have been his forte. When in charge of Battersea we are told he "spared no pains to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the best educational thought of all lands and usually passed his vacations on the Continent, visiting great masters and inquiring after their methods...." Adkins, Thomas, The History of St. John's College, Battersea, p.109, quoted in Pollard, Hugh M., Pioneers of Popular Education, 1760-1850, London, 1956, p.292

14. The congregational singing both in Lyttelton and in Christchurch, which was always described by Charlotte Godley and others as good and hearty, had degenerated by 1857 to "indifferent". Scholefield, Guy H. (Editor), The Richmond-Atkinson Papers, Wellington, 1960, I, p.316

By 1856 there was no doubt of the changed climate for that year Samuel Hodgekinson could write of the settlement's freedom from Tractarian practices and opinion.[15] Indeed he spoke the truth. Mountfort's church which had cost much in time, money and even human life, was scornfully abused as derelect and ugly. With the honeymoon now over, they could not but compare their present difficulties with the past promises of the Association's model colony. In 1857 the slow beginnings of a new development would arise but one founded on very different principles.

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15. Hodgekinson, Samuel, A Description of the Province of Canterbury, New Zealand, London, 1856, p.15

PART I

1

Early Attempts at Choirs - Avonside Christ's College Rangiora Lyttelton 1857 - 1860

It has been argued that Lyttelton's services were influenced at first by the Tractarian origins of the prominent leaders and their music by the congenial surroundings. But as Christchurch grew at the port's expense, attitudes which placed less emphasis on the sacramental aspect of worship spread from the plains. In England, this - what we call the "Broad Church" viewpoint - - had originated in reaction against the fundamentalism and emotional fervour of the Evangelicals on the one hand and the romantic elements within the Oxford Movement on the other; to Walter Farquhar Hook, a "middle way between Methodistical and Popish absurdities". Men like Thomas Arnold and F.D.Maurice realised new scientific discoveries made obsolete traditional interpretations of the Bible. One cannot assume authority they said, where no authority is given and they protested against forcing opinions relating to personal belief. As Jesus became the "Great Example", little importance was attached to religious observances per se; a series of sermons preached in the Christchurch Cathedral during 1885 on "True Manliness" shows this viewpoint at the height of its power. Their theology, developed under the influence of the new Positivist philosophies, sought to rationalise

Christianity in the light of fresh scientific and historical research and to this extent they were a more representative manifestation of the progressive spirit of the times than Tractarianism.

The Parish Church at Leeds witnessed its influence on music. During the incumbency of Dr. Hook, a paid surpliced choir of men and boys was re-formed[1] to render the service fully choral. But whereas the Tractarians had aimed at fully congregational participation in the responses, psalms and, to a lesser extent, in the canticles, at Leeds the man in the pew was invited to listen to a service rendered as "faultless as man can make it". The attitude was reflected in the music: modern Anglican chants, double and single, cathedral-type through-settings of canticles and anthems were invariably sung while Gregorians were eschewed as being incompatible with progress. To achieve and maintain the high standard required, the professional choir was trained under an accomplished musician. The efforts of John Jebb and then Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1842 - 1849) raised that body to a foremost position in England by mid-century.

Admittedly Leeds was exceptional for here an enthusiastic and determined clergyman could draw on the choral tradition and material wealth of the North Country. Hence it was one of the few cases where the choir was formed after a deputation of laity had waited on their clergyman - usually it was the parson who moved first. And not only this.

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1. One started in 1848 had lapsed shortly after due to the high cost involved.

All agreed that no expense should be spared. The civic pride that would later build their town hall, spurred on Hook to continue developing the choral services in spite of increased costs; the high salary and the musical keenness of the people drew Wesley from Exeter Cathedral to the position of organist and choirmaster. All this in turn made men proud to belong to the choir, while the people came from far and near to listen to the music of the services.[2]

There was no national organisation planned to disseminate the middle-of-the-road ideas. Unlike the Tractarian proposals, those initiated by the Broad Church can be seen as a natural development from established Anglican practices. By adopting such a course between extremes few would be offended. Leeds was unique for realising the potential of a cathedral service when standards prevailing at these places were uniformly low. It is indicative of the situation that Jebb was commissioned by Hook to give three public lectures on the choral service[3] and that in 1849 Wesley should launch his attack on the slovenliness of cathedral worship[4] from the same town. But these writings, though influential, can in no way be compared to the systematic distribution of the Parish Choir,[5] the High Church periodical. The

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2. Rainbow, op.cit., Chapter 2

3. Jebb, John, Three Lectures on the Choral Service of the Church of England, Leeds, 1843

4. Wesley, S.S., A Few Words on Cathedral Music and the Musical System of the Church with a plan of reform, London, 1849

5. The Parish Choir, London, 1846-1851

restoration of the choral services at the Temple Church was due as much to the efforts of E.J.Hopkins, their organist, as to the guidance a keen musical barrister, William Burge, derived from Jebb's lectures. And again we see the pride, this time within the Inns of Court, that initiated such a move.

Thus during the 1840s there emerged two distinct concepts of liturgical reform: while the Tractarians laid emphasis on the congregation's role, the Broad Churchmen stressed the primacy of the choir. However, reform to the degree maintained at Chelsea and Leeds was exceptional and when ideas filtered through to the ordinary parishes they were inevitably adapted to suit local conditions. A mixture of Jebb and Helmore resulted, one reflecting the personal attitudes of the individual parson and his skill at leading an often conservative and musically untutored congregation. An improvement which must have been typical of many was carried out by the Rev. H.J.C.Harper in the Berkshire hamlet of Stratfield Mortimer.

When Harper came in 1840, parish life there was at a low ebb. Under the former incumbent the church buildings had deteriorated, great care being lavished instead on the attendent horse stables. As in many similar instances, an energetic clergyman needed to start from scratch. A major area of reform lay in removing the west end gallery choir and band, then still a feature of rural churches in the southern counties.[6] Long

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6. See MacDermott, K.H., The Old Church Gallery Minstrels, London, 1948

sessions of diplomacy easing their exit, the rustic musicians finally left and the structure was torn down. Simultaneously the rood screen which traditionally housed the squire's family was removed to enable restoration of the chancel; all this amid the feverish activity of scrubbing walls and floors, replacing high pews by open stalls and the purchase of a barrel organ to supply a more decorous accompaniment.

> This strange instrument was set up in one of the side galleries and on either side of it was arranged a choir of children trained by a Reading schoolmaster. Like Hook, Harper was unmusical; both therefore employed outsiders to manage choral matters.[7] On one side of the organ were twelve boys in surplices, on the other twelve girls in blue tippets and white mob-caps. The leader of the old band, being the most vigorous personage, was given the post of "organist" and the rest of the members were merged in the general congregation.[7]

Here we see then the judicious blending of the two ideas. Harper was not a Tractarian though he leaned towards some of their viewpoints. If he would preach in the customary black robe, he celebrated the sacraments in a surplice.[8] Indeed any attempt at "popish ritual" would receive short shrift from the villagers. Harper's was a cautious acceptance befitting one who had formed his theology in pre-Tractarian days; one who pragmatically sifted such ideas through constant and intimate contact with young and old, academic and artisan. His chaplaincy at Eton College (1832-1840), where we are told he did "more than perhaps any other

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7. Purchas, H.T., Bishop Harper and the Canterbury Settlement, Christchurch, 1909, pp.18-19

8. C.S., 12.2.1857

man to raise the tone of the services",[9] bears out later evidence from Canterbury that he followed Arnold's doctrine of toleration.

He also differed from Leeds, in that he neither desired nor would ever achieve the choral perfection of that northern town. What he, and all the reformers hoped for, was an improvement in conduct and reverence by all who took part in worship.

In England, Jebb's school of church music finally emerged supreme. If the Crystal Palace had demonstrated the enormous wealth of the country, then the 'sixties allowed it to be enjoyed by more and more people. John Marshall of Leeds uttered a valid judgement when he declared, wealth comes first, "refinement of manners and taste are of slower growth." Vocal enthusiasm reminiscent of the non-conformist chapel was not respectable to a society on the march towards perfection. The overriding popularity of the cathedral service was gained not so much on religious grounds but because it suited the contemporary ethos.

Yet even if it had not succeeded, wide acceptance of the converse goal, that of Helmore's, seems musically imposible. Laudable though the aim appears, the road was too hard and specialised. During the 'sixties even notably Tractarian churches such as S. Andrew's, Wells Street and S. Barnabas', Pimlico, switched to the cathedral ideal. Thoseaat Wells Street became fashionable and every Sunday people would converge on the

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9. quoted in Purchas, op.cit., p.8

church from all parts of the city. Temperley is surely right when he remarks,

> there has never been a time in the history of the church when ordinary congregations of working men and women have been available to devote regular hours to the practice of church music. At best a portion of the congregation can be drawn in; and this portion inevitably becomes the choir.[10]

The alliance between the Broad Church style of worship and the growth of prosperity was noted at Leeds. In London it was the same though based more on social and commercial factors. The sight-singing classes originally held for the moral benefit of the poor were now taken over by the middle classes in their thirst for "culture"; for them it meant a step towards life's better things. And as the fruits of the nineteenth century trade expansion spread to other towns and cities, they too wanted the badge of success Therefore it was almost certain that as the remote antipodean settlement of Canterbury grew and more people, fresh from England, immigrated, the same trends would be seen at Christchurch.

At first development in the colony was slow, especially in Christchurch where the port hills proved an effective barrier during the 1850s. All that could be seen from the top of the Bridle Path, for the majority their first view of the capital, were some isolated houses, arbitrarily scattered on patches of cultivated land, and a few tracks

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10. Temperley, Nicholas, "The Anglican Choral Revival" in the Musical Times, Jan., 1871, pp.73-75 Temperley presents a counter argument to Rainbow.

and dirt roads. Apart from the faint voices of cattle and sheep, "a great silence brooded over the land,"[11] and according to Samuel Butler, closer inspection did not make it more attractive.

In contrast, Lyttelton generally benefitted from the sheltering hills. Admittedly they funnelled cold winds down the harbour and reduced the amount of sun, but in matters of health gave Lyttelton a distinct advantage over Christchurch, a dust bowl in summer and in winter a quagmire. By concentrating development they fostered a community spirit absent on the plain; during the early 'fifties a choral society and town band under James McCardell were giving recitals and the port still laid claim to the main post office, the only bank and the sole newspaper.

But in 1857 with the rise in the value of exports (the first wool ship to sail direct to England left Lyttelton the previous year) the Provincial Council began bold policies of development. That year, with a daily post along the main Sumner Road between Lyttelton and Christchurch, the first step was taken to end the isolation of the plains. The next decade saw advances on an unparalled scale. The building of the Provincial Chambers (1859-1865), a public hospital (1859-1864) and the creation of the Municipal Council (1862) emphasised the growing importance of Christchurch. But the greatest expansion came with communications.

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11. Harper, Henry W., Letters from New Zealand, London, 1914, p.3

In 1862 a telegraph between the two centres (the first in New Zealand) meant the removal of the Chamber of Commerce and the Lyttelton Times to the capital. But Moorhouse's decision to build a railway tunnel from the port to Heathcote had the most far reaching consequences. Surveys began in 1858, tunnelling in 1860 and when completed seven years later it brought not only Christchurch but gradually the whole hinterland within easy access of shipping. For Lyttelton it accelerated its decline, the railway yards destroying much of the place's former idyllic character.

The Church also showed signs of waking up. Harper, still at Stratfield Mortimer, was persuaded by Selwyn, then Bishop of New Zealand, to lead the Canterbury diocese and when he arrived at the end of 1856 he saw an organisation which had truly deteriorated. To the Anglican's shame the churches that existed (Riccarton, Akaroa, Papanui, Kaiapoi and Christchurch) all doubled as schools and most were in a deplorable condition. The one at Kaiapoi offered no shelter from wind or dust while Papanui (Plate 5) sported an unlined shed.[12] None were worthy to be consecrated. In an ostensibly Church of England settlement, rival denominations seemed far more active.

With Church and political authority now under visible leadership, change was reflected in other realms. The hard grind of establishing the province was lessening and a more relaxed atmosphere cautiously spread. That year, 1857, at the

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12. L.T., 10.11.1858

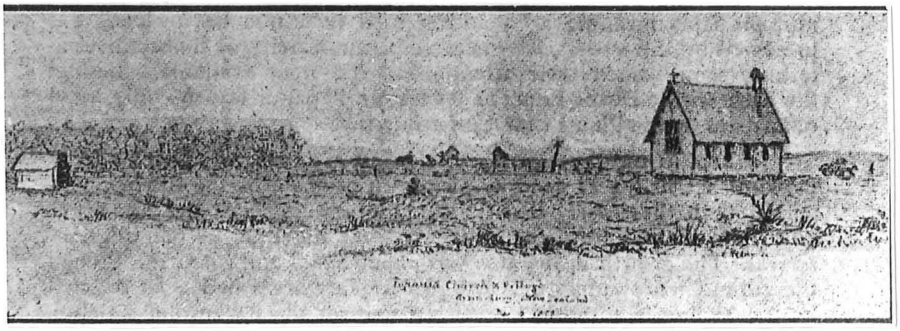

Plate 5: Papanui Church in 1852

Plate 6: Rangiora Church, interior, 1864

opening of the Christchurch Town Hall, a recital of instrumental and vocal numbers, given under the capable guidence of Charles Merton, drew the attention of a reporter fully alive to the significance.

> The first attempt at a concert, with a fair number of performers, and in a spacious building filled to overflowing, showed that the trial and struggle for life's bare necessaries endured by the first settlers were becoming less severe - that there /was/ now time and means available for innocent recreation. It must always be satisfactory in such communities as ours to see a wish to recur to pursuits, which in their own way, indicate a recollection that we were born for something higher than to seek a supply of our own bodily wants.[13]

These social conditions provided a catalyst for church choirs to exist and in their formation it was the same Charles Merton who started them.

Merton had arrived on the boat which brought the Bishop to his new diocese. In physique, temperament and religious toleration the two men were not unlike: they shared an easy liking for people's company and were themselves men of action. Merton's fine bass voice, dynamic energy and ability to lead had already told in England, making him, as far as his village was concerned, the "moving spirit in all things musical."[14]

Immediately on his arrival in the settlement he continued his interests, setting up a small school, establishing singing classes on the Hullah

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13. ibid., 7.10.1857

14. MacDonald Canterbury Biographies in the Canterbury Museum.

system and forming and organising groups for many miles around. Under the auspices of the Church of England he held classes at Christ's College, then known as the Christchurch Grammar School. There, pupils met weekly for the practice of glees, madrigals, anthems and excerpts from popular oratorios.[15] As the community would later realise, he was the first of a line of musical rejuvenators from England, to be followed by such men as Robert Parker, Neville George Barnett and Henry Wells. In the parish situation he occupied much the same place as that Reading singing master had done in Stratfield Mortimer.

One of the earliest official engagements at which both Harper and Merton were present was at the opening of the Avonside church, the first to be consecrated in the diocese. It was not a particularly ambitious building but the parishioners were duly proud of their efforts. Picturesquely set in a wooded grove within site of the Avon River, the little cob-walled church reminded many, of those in the country areas of southern England. The services too were reminiscent for worship under the conservative incumbent, Charles Mackie, could well be decribed as "Methodistical". A black preaching robe was customarily worn, the congregation sat in "compartments of six" and probably only lack of height prevented a gallery housing a choir for the singing of the hymns.[16]

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15. C.S., 9.4.1857

16. L.T., 28.2.1857 For New Zealand the situation must have been unique. The Bishop of Waiapu told the 1865 General Synod that during the early 'thirties, despite the fact his clergy were all Low Churchmen and the services were in carpenter's sheds, surplices were worn and the altars generally covered with a linen "ephod". ibid., 4.5.1865

But it satisfied the parish and W.G.Brittan evidently echoed popular feeling in the district when he commented,

> Altogether we are bound to express that since leaving the old country it is the first occasion that we have felt we were in a Church.[17]

Though a small controversy arose from the practices Harper evidently tolerated the worship there for at the end of February, assisted by Mackie and Henry Jacobs, the consecration took place. The usual morning service was read, the Bishop preached and the large congregation of visitors and parishioners were led in the singing of hymns by Charles Merton, John Bilton playing the accompaniment on a harmonium.[18]

Musically the occasion is not important for nothing distinguishes it from ordinary services held in and around Christchurch at this time. Its significance lies however, in the fact that it was the last important religious function where music was tied to the old Evangelical pattern, a position highlighted when juxtaposed with events only five months later. In July of the same year the Bishop laid the foundation stone of Christ's College.

> The ceremony was opened by the choir, under the direction of Mr Merton, singing a psalm etc, after which the forms of prayer, dedication etc, were gone through.... A psalm of praise concluded the ceremonial service, which was simple but striking....[19]

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17. C.S., 26.2.1857 18. L.T., 28.2.1857

19. ibid., 29.7.1857 c.f. "At the Temple Church the silent congregation soon found that the singing of their new disciplined choir could be listened to

Immediately we see the pattern at Avonside broken. At the College a separately constituted choir of pupils had been formed under the tuition of a trained singing master. Merton had the boys around him all week and time could be given to preparation. Perhaps the choice of psalms over hymns was made to induce the congregation to keep silent. Almost certainly Anglican chants, not Gregorians, were used and the favourable comments suggest the psalms had been pointed to give a tidy rendition.

Perhaps inspired by the success of the College function, Lyttelton was forced to improve her own rather paltry efforts in this direction. The first reference in Lyttelton to such a body, one separately constituted, starts with the beginning of their new church. At the foundation stone ceremony the scene bore a distinct resemblance to that at Christ's College two years previously, with a choir group clustered around a harmonium. The choir still performed by themselves even though the Lyttelton Times had printed the service for public distribution. Psalms again replaced hymns and the congregation were thilled at the standard achieved by the school children.[20]

These were formal choirs in the sense they existed apart from the general worshipper. Their training was such that they could sing a

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with pleasure, even edification, so patiently superior was it both in devotional and aesthetic effect to the customary effusions of a few wilful enthusiasts." Rainbow, op.cit., pp.41-42

20. L.T., 27.6.1859

psalm or simple anthem for the delight of the silent congregation and in this sense they can rightly be compared to the Temple Church choir. But it must be stressed that neither of these instances reported above pertained to the ordinary parish within the settlement. The relatively concentrated lessons that Merton was able to give within an organised College were not feasible outside unless it be as at Lyttelton, for a particular event. Normally their purpose was merely to lead. Nevertheless, the growth of choirs as a permanent and distinct group in parish life, we must regard as stemming from this period.

The intervening two years saw a difference at Avonside. Mackie had returned to England in mid-'57 to be replaced by another Evangelical, the Rev. J.C.Bagshaw. But under him a more conventional interior was adopted with low pews as at the Temporary Church replacing the box seating. With this change, several of the younger and more enthusiastic women of the parish banded together and with the help of some children (no men's names have survived) led the singing at the services. They held weekly practices but in this instance their role was severely restricted to hymns and possible an occasional psalm. Mary Brittan (later the wife of William Rolleston) was an active member from the start, but she soon lost patience over Bagshaw's impositions. As she saw it, the "lack of spirit" in the choir stemmed from the short practices permitted and the absence of any incentive. Above all the slowness of the hymns, taken from the non-conformist Watts' collection was "poison"

to her.[21] She evidently had sympathisers and one of her friends thought it might be better to give up the choir. But this was defeatism and instead she led the choir out on strike - the first in Canterbury.[22] The result unfortunately is not recorded.

Whether Merton was directly involved either in the setting up of these choirs or taking the odd practices we cannot tell. One difficulty in establishing his influence - or anyone else's for that matter - lies in the informality connected with the choirmaster's position. No tenure dates were kept in the minute books. The freedom seen in importing non-residents of the parochial area to direct the music was common during the first decade of settlement and persisted in subsequent years in the younger parishes. Harper himself fully supported a similar movement among the clergy; it made them more interdependent and hindered apathy in the small parishes by ensuring a healthy variation in the services. At Avonside a roster was drawn up for those able to play the harmonium (Mary Brittan was one) and a corresponding arrangement may have been made at Lyttelton - a hangover from the days of Butterfield and the church choral groups. The position at Christchurch remained the exception with Bilton permanently in sole charge of the music. Naturally lack of any real continuity hindered progress but with the

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21. Two letters from E.B.Hichins to Mary Brittan, undated and uncatalogued in the A.T.L. Avonside is the only place where the use of Watts' Hymns are specifically mentioned.

22. Rolleston, Rosemary, William and Mary Rolleston, Christchurch, 1971, p.34

simple musical numbers little attention was paid to this matter. We must remember that congregational participation, though variable in success, was still the ideal for the churches and consequently the singing was confined to the familiar in which all could join.

Another difficulty comes with the intermittent reports of the church services. Unless a special occasion was being marked they failed to attract the attention of the press. Even when Merton took up his long held position at Rangiora (Plate 6) and developed a choir to sing regularly at the services, and with a degree of success in quality, there is silence for the first seven years.

Nevertheless, Merton's own views on church music can be surmised. His interest always centred on education and it is through education his ideas of religious music were formed. Choirs had two functions: to lead a more dignified service in which all could participate and for their rehearsals, to serve as a convenient occasion where music of all kinds, both secular and religious, could be introduced. At the College, choir activities must have been well assimilated into the ordinary music classes. Certainly at Rangiora his singing groups were known for their versatility and when they gave recitals at Kaiapoi and Oxford the aim was as much instruction as entertainment

Merton gave no speeches outlining his views on service music; he wrote no articles supporting one system of training or arrangement against another. His influence was practical. In the early stages of a settlement it was enough merely for people to

take part and enjoy themselves. Theorising was a later development when groups were desiring expert knowledge on choir organisation.

Lyttelton of 1860 comes as a transition between these early attempts at Avonside and the College, and the more serious and ambitious schemes of 1863 at St. Michael's and elsewhere. Although short-lived and of uncertain standard it was definite the first blow struck for brighter and more musical services at a main centre rather than at the more isolated suburbs. It matched the public and general interest then surrounding civic affairs. In their new church a proper chancel was built to house the choir, the singers attempted to branch out from the usual chants and hymns into something more elaborate and finally the Lyttelton Times published the first criticism of a choir together with concrete proposals for improvement and the setting up of others.

Initially the old church was to be repaired and Mountfort was called in again to supervise the work. But to the financiers the patching proved distasteful. Plans were then revised, so thoroughly indeed that a whole new building was conceived.[23] Yet hestiancy in entrusting large

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23. The 1856 plans are in the Canterbury Museum. The walls were to be of stone and though considerably lower than the 1853 church - achieved by omitting the clerestory - was still about ten feet higher than the present one which it otherwise resembles.

sums of money to another bold idea of Mountfort and a growing skepticism about the architect's true skill, especially with work on an awkward sloping site, ensured the drawings never left the board.

All the time there was a pressing need for more accomodation. The room at the Barracks could hold only 130 at a pinch and, barely adequate in 1852, it had long since failed to serve the expanding congregation. As the problem mounted so Anglican prestige fell. Jibes that preceded the building of the first church were resurrected and churchmen had stoically to accept the butts. Common knowledge that other denominations could raise money without difficulty for their own buildings served only to rub salt into the wounds. So to the people of Lyttelton the consecration in 1860 of Holy Trinity was a second beginning. Final success at last capped a decade marked by disappointment and frustration.

In more general terms the church was a strong expression of a new social force within Anglicanism; in position and shape, symbolic. Far from dominating the town, it was at one with the other buildings of the port; though architecturally far superior to the ordinary shops and houses lining the streets, in size it was not distinct from them.[24] George Mallinson, the architect, made sure that it was of the land and his later church at Governor's Bay is an even more stiking example in this vein. The trend away from a do-it-

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24. The press advocated it as a model for all future public buildings. L.T., 16.2.1859

Plate 7: George Mallinson's Holy Trinity, Lyttelton, c.1870

yourself attitude towards greater prefessionalism was inevitable as the settlement shed its pioneering flavour. In this case the money spent served to emphasise the growing prosperity of the port and its importance relative to the province as a whole.

Even though people trudged over the hills from Christchurch to attend the consecration and though a public holiday was proclaimed in Lyttelton, few could have realised the full significance of that day, for here the notion of the fashionable service in an equally fashionable church, a vogue already established in London and later to be seen in Christchurch, had its Canterbury genesis. Where worship was conducted on these lines, music always played a major part.

Chancel seating for the occasion was already taken up by the clergy. There were ten in all - Francis Knowles and B.W.Dudley from Lyttelton[25] and eight from Christchurch including the Bishop. The unsurpliced choir, consisting of pupils from the local school, was consequently seated as best it could in one of the transepts facing latecomers who found the nave already filled. The choir had been well trained under Charles Jennings and J.B.Stansell, two qualified music teachers prominent in local choral activities, for regular solfa singing lessons were still part of the curriculum.

Jennings was a gifted man, his talents impaired only by ill-health. In Maidstone, Kent, he had

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25. At the same ceremony Knowles was inducted as incumbent on Dudley's transference to Rangiora. The latter's partnership with Merton, one lasting twenty years, thus began.

been the parish organist and headmaster of the College School, teaching music there under Hullah's method. But bouts of tuberculosis forced him to emigrate to a more equitable climate and choosing Canterbury, he arrived early in 1859. As if to belie his weak condition, he started solfa classes in the Lyttelton Grammar School over and above his full time employment there as a staff member. But a year's work at this pace did nothing to improve his health and at last realising this, he retired to Papanui where he died at the end of 1860, aged only thirty-three.[26]

James Stansell was of stronger constitution. His first public performance was with Merton, Jennings and McCardell at a concert in honour of the Superintendent, William Moorhouse, in 1859. On three occasions the following year he conducted the Lyttelton Choral Society in glees and part songs. Originally a supporter of Mainzer's singing system, he held classes in Lyttelton from 1859 to 1863 and then at his home in Cranmer Square - yet another move indicative of the growing importance of the plains. Three years after that, convinced of the superior merits of Curwin's tonic solfa, he was engaged by the Wesleyans in an attempt to improve their church psalmody. Under these men the young choir probably had a good working knowledge of elementary vocal music.

The actual consecration service was read throughout for to intone his obligatory part was beyond the Bishop's musical capabilities. However, the short ceremony finished, a choral matins

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26. L.T., 12.3.1859; 2.4.1859; 5.12.1860

immediately began. Three special pslams sung to Anglican chants, Jackson's Te Deum and Mason's "Lord of all power and might" were rendered by the choir "with great effect",[27] Stansell and Jennings probably singing the limited tenor and bass parts, while C.J.Hodge accompanied.

The anthem and Te Deum call for comment. Both were popular in Victorian church circles at the mid-century and before, and the Mason was not without a certain unsophisticated charm. Typical of many easier Georgian anthems, it was basically an ornamented hymn tune with rudimentary harmonies, above which two treble lines in solo and duet form gave rhythmic interest to the rather staid lower parts. The setting of the Te Deum had an even greater popularity though by this time its life was coming to an end. (St. Michael's sang it as late as April, 1872.) Its one time success is now hard to understand; words sapped of all meaning by the vitiating rhythm, harmonic movement reduced to stagnant cliches and crude pictorialism.[28] The most charitable explanation for its success is that in an age when musical discretion was not of the highest, it fulfilled a function. A choir with little training could give and accurate performance and for many, correctness and evenly balanced chords were enough to satisfy. Hullah himself records how thrilled were the Exeter Hall audiences to hear a simple common chord sung by

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27. ibid., 11.4.1860

28. At the consecration of St. Peter's, Akaroa, the choir sang Jackson's "noble Te Deum in F in a manner which, if it left anything open to regret, was only that so inspiring a composition should not be the rule instead of the exception." ibid., 1.12.1864

massed children. In Canterbury its use was confined to two types of choirs: those, like Lyttelton and Akaroa, which were just starting and wanted an elementary piece that would yet sound dignified to the congregation, and those, instanced by St. Michael's in 1872, whose standard had so dropped that a performance of Jackson was all they could accomplish.

To the congregation at the port and the visitors from the plain the choir was highly satisfactory; their standard accorded well with the church and in the services their singing added to the solemnity. But to others, fresh from the rapid choral developments in the London churches, the efforts of colonial choirs in general left much to be desired.

Only two months after the expansive reports of the consecration, an "ex-chorister from England" singled out the Lyttelton choir as being among the worst he had encountered.[29] Faulty intonation and imbalance of parts were the main points of criticism and only rigourous remedies immediately implemented could restore order and decency. Prospective choir members, he advocated, should be auditioned to provide a reasonable basic level for future development. Such a test would also sift out the uninterested and lazy. Then, once chosen, the whole choir should be trained by a capable instructor acquainted not only with voice technique but also with a wide repertoire of church music. Finally - and the most contentious point of all - to ensure punctuality and proficiency,

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29. ibid., 23.6.1860

a nominal salary should be paid, if not to all members, then at least to the senior singers and scaled according to the standard achieved by the choir as laid down by the clergy. Naturally the usual custom of a choirmaster giving his services gratis would be abolished and the ten pound a year emolument given to John Bilton at Christchurch[30] raised considerably.

Such a solution, especially coming from an outsider, was naturally cold shouldered. Church finances, though better than in some years could not meet the added expense. Apart from this, the whole idea of payment in what had traditionally been an office of goodwill was abhorrent to the congregation. If one paid choirboys for attending services, it was indignantly argued, there could be no reason why the boys should not be paid for attending school - it was all part of their education. The scheme was absurd; it appeared too grandiose for Lyttelton and Christchurch remained uninterested.

Thus ended the first of the theorists on local church music. Nothing is known about the writer or how long he stayed in the province. Certainly if he had any experience with colonial church choirs he learnt nothing from it. His fault lay in trying to impose in one step a Jebb-type musical service on a community whose social foundations and church background regarding music were totally inadequate. Ultimate desires in this direction could not be pushed. Merton worked by precept; it was slow but successful in the end.

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30. ibid., 15.1.1859

And so for the next two years, the choir languished, receiving only intermittent notice in the papers. These serve chiefly to convey the names of choirmasters who came and went - a Mr Herbert (1861), C.J.Hodge (1862)[31] and Joseph Carder (1863). This neglect was not solely the fault of the choir for the town as a social and cultural centre was gradually fading. New immigrants continued to settle in her environs but increasingly sought the other side of the port hills where there was stimulating development. Any new growth, unconnected with shipping or the transporting of goods, was virtually overshadowed by that of Christchurch.

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31. At the second anniversary of the consecration several pieces of music were "well executed" by the choir under his direction. ibid., 26.4.1862

2
The New Era
- St Michael's, St Luke's Lyttelton
1863 - 1865

After sleeping peacefully in the shadow of Lyttelton for more than a decade, Anglicanism in Christchurch began to stir in the early 'sixties. The change came almost overnight. St. Michael's and St. Luke's formed choirs in 1863 and when St. John's, Latimer Square was opened in 1865 its musical efforts eclipsed those of the other churches. Gradually as more places of worship were built in the diocese, the choir was regarded as indispensible. At the same time music was discussed, organs purchased and the merits of various players assessed in letters to the editors. The pivotal point came in 1863.

The prevailing mood of despondency before this date is not solely the fault of the Church; for a long time it had been merely part of the general conditions. Nevertheless, from 1857 when Christchurch as a whole started to emerge from the pioneer period, the Anglican organisation indicated little enthusiasm; the services, a useful pointer to change, remained by and large, as before.

In contrast to Lyttelton in 1860, the services at St. Michael's were drab. Archdeacon Octavius Mathias or Henry Jacobs customarily read the weekly offices,[1] the psalms were recited

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1. The Rev. Charles Alabaster, a young curate under Mathias, experimentally carried out daily morning services there in 1862 but these terminated after

antiphonally between the congregation and precentor while the musical portions were reduced to the singing of hymns and metrical psalms. Various attempts had been made to form choirs, Bilton selecting the more promising boys at the Grammar School, but these initiatives proved ephemeral in the face of outside attractions. As the aim was still a boys' choir, Fitzgerald admitted that any serious venture to improve the singing would first have to provide choristers with musical ability and second, give them incentives to attend regular rehersals.[2]

These services reveal much of the stagnant plight of Canterbury Anglicanism. Yet because one part of society can rarely be cut off totally from the rest, the influence of outside civic progress became reflected in church circles with the growing desire for a cathedral. The arrival of Harper and the consequent completion of church heirarchy slowly revived the nascent idea in many people's minds - the vision of a cathedral rising in the community's midst to provide a focal point for all denominations. Harper was not unnaturally anxious for a start to be made and so within a year the actual site at the eastern end of the Square had been approved and Gilbert Scott named as architect.[3] But money on the scale needed was scarce, especially for non-utilitarian church buildings and a long self-conscious pause followed

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six months when his health broke down. He died three years later. NZCN, March, 1890

2. P., 3.9.1863

3. Letter from H.J.C.Harper to J.E.Fitzgerald, 25.10.1857, in Church House.

as other more urgent problems arose to divert attention.

Recovery from the doldrums took a long time, and indeed might have gone on longer had outside opinion not forced the Church to take action.

During the late 'fifties and 'early sixties Christchurch swelled in numbers as renewed efforts at immigration were felt. Most of the new arrivals intended going on to farms but, as in America and Australia before, impoverishment and lack of incentive when once the colony was reached, imprisoned them within the city. They were mainly labourers and itinerants and their ranks, despite the screening in London, augmented the list of undesirables. Inevitably social problems accompanied them. In 1863 the Provincial Council resounded to Fitzgerald's denunciations of the brazen immorality and drunkenness which existed alongside the slightly precious cultural institutions.

That a problem existed was obvious to anyone who visited the town. Bold reforms were imperative but on whom to lay the resposibility was not so clear. The Church, the traditional safeguard of moral values, no longer held authority for immigration had coincided with the rapid spread of disbelief under the impact of the new German theologians and the Darwinists whose writings were conceived within the agnostic spirit of contemporary scientific progress. These yielded, in their popularised form, an intellectual backing to an uncritical populace in search of evidence for long held but hitherto uncomfortable views. Disbelief, now liberated, became

respectable.

The resurgence of church choirs after 1863 must be seen in this whole context. Whereas Oakeley's and Helmore's practices were subservient to a wider theological framework, the new generation of choirs was a response by a church more and more concerned with its social failings. Hopefully a more attractive service would attract the vagrants from the streets.

But to return to the proposed cathedral. The initiatives of 1857 were still religious; its purpose was to function not only as the centre of a strong Anglican diocese but as a nuceul for all denominations. After 1863 however, this drive for completion gradually became superseded by the stressing of externals - the architecture, the furniture, the ritual, and above all, the music.

Outside criticism had been levelled at the apathetic church in 1858 when the Lyttelton Times called on the Anglican authorities to combat the "rapid and alarming growth of a comparatively uneducated generation."[4] Far from looking to their educational facilities, a solution was attempted through enlarging the existing church building (between 1858 and 1862 three separate additions were made) and erecting another, St. Luke's (1860). One further decision taken in November 1862 which authorised a complete south aisle to be added to the senior church, was the last of such steps to remedy the situation. What may be called the church's "social policy" proper began the year

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4. L.T., 9.6.1858

after when a parochial institute was formed at St. Michael's.

Falling between a Mechanics' Institute and an entertainment club, it was designed with the aim of "bringing together members of other religious communities, to establish combined action for the purposes of piety and charity."[5] In this way Anglicans hoped to play their part in stemming the high rate of destitution and what Victorians called "the social evil". But any hope of concrete action to alleviate the suffering of the poor was illusory. In truth it existed to serve the interests of the middle class and the range of courses that were set up confirm this: Christchurch offered choral tuition, English history and a series of lectures on the Prayer Book; at Lyttelton, where Knowles formes a similar institute in 1864, a Bible class, two grades of singing classes and instruction in mathematics were organised.[6]

Music was indeed taken seriously and the Church Quarterly Magazine, a diocesan publication carrying some weight, gave it very definite aims:

> ...a class for the cultivation of sacred, and the higher order of secular, music, having for its special object the improvement of music and singing in the Parish Church, should always, if possible, form an important feature of the Church Institute. The quarterly social gatherings would afford an object for their practice and impart zeat and interest to it.[7]

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5. P., 28.11.1863
6. L.T., 20.6.1863; C.Q., January, 1864, p.24
7. C.Q., July, 1863, p.17

First then, the Institutes were designed specifically for the improvement of middle class morality and culture, two aspects of life which had become increasingly important to that wide segment of the English nation after the Great Exhibition. It was in keeping with the same trend that the Church now steered clear of the real problems and headed for a safe respectability.

But however important the Institute's social function, its significance in establishing church choirs was immeasurably greater. The second object sought improvements to the choral portions of the service, a task which for the first few weeks was concerned solely with encouraging the congregation to sing the hymns and canticles.

The churches engaged in this new drive were St. Michael's, its chapel-of-ease, St. Luke's, and Holy Trinity at Lyttelton but the circumstances under which the choirs developed were so different in all three cases as to make necessary an examination of each.

Of the choir activities in 1863, those centred on St. Michael's were by far the most important. Notwithstanding the superior appointments of the Lyttelton church, St. Michael's since the arrival of the Bishop had gradually taken on cathedral status.[8] Therefore when the idea to form a choir was put forward, it was to be no ordinary venture. As the prospect of a cathedral choir played uppermost in the minds of the people, the parish ideal was left behind. Plans for the building

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8. L.T. 26.11.1862

were by now well advanced and the accomplishment and maintenance of a proper cathedral service, with all the organisation and facilities involved, could not be achieved without adequate rehersal. Greater care and elaboration than that bestowed in parish services would be required and the formation of choirs attached to city churches provided an opportune moment to iron out difficulties. For this reason meetings of more than usual import were held at St. Michael's to discuss the implications.

There was no doubt the task was complicated for three stages of development needed to be bridged in one move. A cathedral choir had to be created from nothing, by-passing the intermediate stage of a parish one yet constantly keeping the parochial situation in mind. Hence music would be of a more congregational nature than that normally associated with a cathedral. Success would still depend on directness and simplicity for as the Rangiora choir strike of 1867[9] would later testify, opinions were still strongly divided on the merits of a full choral service in which the congregation remained silent. The singing might be feeble, even non-existant, but any attempt to take it entirely out of the congregation's hands would destroy the democracy, as the people saw it, of the Anglican service. It was all very well for the Roman Catholics to have elaborate Haydn and Mozart masses, even Churchmen admitted their success,[10] but it could not compensate for the

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8. L.T., 26.11.1862
9. ibid., 5.11.1867; 6.11.1867
10. ibid., 1.11.1864

man in the pew.

At the first meeting on August 20, 1863 the problem of where to start immediately loomed large. Borrowing too literally from past experience in the settlement would inevitably bring failure; on the other hand, to strike out boldly on new paths equally courted disaster. English cathedrals offered little help. Most of them slumbered in generations-old lethargy and the premature reforms of the Rev. W.K.Hamilton at Salisbury[11] hardly invited publicity in New Zealand. Another decade was still to pass before Stainer would initiate his at St. Paul's. In the end the meeting finally proposed that Jacobs and Bilton should head a committee to draw up some rules; these would then be presented as guidelines for future discussion in the following week.[12]

Fitzgerald was enthusiastic and the space devoted to the choir's activities in editorial and news columns of the Press, of which he was editor, indicates his intense interest in these developments undertaken by the church authorities. He had al already drawn attention to the need for a strong staff of boys as the basis of any new choir despite the failure of previous attempts to rely on children. The services of men, and possibly even women, could perhaps give some support but if a traditional cathedral choir was to be formed, boys were a sine qua non.

The second meeting at the church was no

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11. Rainbow, op.cit., pp.261-262
12. L.T., 19.8.1863; P., 22.8.1863

disappointment to Fitzgerald. For authority the fundamentals of the English practice were used with the backbone of the new attempt depending on a sufficient number of diligent and musically inclined boys, regularly trained - not the easiest matter to arrange in a place such as Christchurch with its relaxed atmosphere and warm summer months then approaching. School attendance itself was hard enough to maintain against outdoor attractions and home commitments without added impositions. Nevertheless it was hoped that twelve publicly subscribed scholarships would provide a suitable answer. Fitzgerald thought the decision a bold step in the right direction. "The members of the Church," he wrote, "may fairly be congratulated on this resolution of the clergy."[13]

Twelve choral scholarships were proposed. Six would offer ten pounds annually and a free College education to the senior boys; the other six, of five pounds and free lessons at a church school, being awarded to those under ten. St. Michael's school was not specifically mentioned but in reality successful applicants were left with little else. Avonside (only just completed that year - 1863), Riccarton and two at Heathcote were nominally in the running but transport difficulties to and from the city rendered these impractical; a fifth attached to St. Luke's had been in existence for over two years but catered only for those under seven.[14] However, such a scheme it was hoped would avoid the "short- comings...that had been the chief cause of failure in previous attempts

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13. P., 11.9.1863 14. L.T., 19.11.1863

to form a choir, combining the elements of permanence and musical ability."[15]

Despite assurances of willing support both monetary and otherwise, by the end of November only two junior scholarships had been donated. One was given anonymously, the other by Mr J.G.Hawkes. As a member of the Provincial Council (1862-1867), Hawkes had taken an active part in promoting the denominational schools when that system was heavily under fire and the scholarship furthered his aim to strengthen the Church's hold on education. Shortly after, the date for auditions was announced. When only three candidates presented themselves before Jacobs and Bilton, the optimism of the promoters during the previous weeks must have been dampened.

There are many reasons to account for this disappointment. Some - religious scruples over payment of choir singers, lack of transport from outlying areas, and timidity when entrusting a child's education to what might easily be only a temporary situation - we have already seen. But a far more likely reason lay in the recent report of the Commission on Education.[16] Here, the church schools in particular came in for much adverse criticism. Apart from Christ's College where a qualified staff achieved satisfactory results, all suffered from untrained teachers and bad conditions; without exception the buildings were cold and damp encouraging absenteeism in the winter months; illness, caused

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15. P., 11.9.1863 16. L.T., 19.11.1863

by lack of floor insulation against drafts, among teachers and pupils prevailed and generally the rooms were overcrowded. At St. Luke's a school held in the small dark vestry, proved inaccessible after heavy rain and on such days even the teacher, who lived at some distance, stayed away. At Heathcote squalid conditions reminiscent of dame schools in England reasserted themselves and the cottage classroom was unequivocably condemned. Avonside was numbered among those whose academic pretensions were almost non-existant. Faced with this report it is small wonder that parents hesitated to put their sons forward, free education or no. Furthermore the senior scholarships to the recommended school, Christ's College, had not eventuated.

If there was this strong reluctance on the part of parents, the boys themselves felt no real compulsion and an audition held at the beginning of the long summer holidays predictably aroused little enthusiasm.

Yet, despite the setback, two boys who showed some promise in both voice and reading ability were chosen. Edward Deacon, of whom nothing is known, was awarded Hawkes' Reading Scholarship and Henry Fowle Seager gained the other.[17] Seager was particularly adept at sight reading, a skill which he probably learnt from his musical father.

But the scholarship holders were only the elite of the choir - the pick of the bunch. Their

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17. P., 23.12.1863

rewards were to be regarded as an incentive for others to improve their own standard. The larger proportion of the choir by far consisted of men, women and boys who were unpaid. The boys, from Bilton's ordinary school classes, were given free musical tuition and had preference when a scholarship fell vacent. Adults, on the other hand, were expected to pay a small sum to the choirmaster for his services[18] - a fee similar to the half-crown they already paid at the Institute.

That progress in the early stages of organisation had been made seemed confirmed by the first choir practice held on the 6 September. Though bad weather made travelling difficult and unpleasant, the rehersal of the following Sunday's (6 September) music was "well attended". These practices were probably held in St. Michael's, still the only church to have an organ, under Bilton who presumably played and conducted the choir at both city churches. Until J.A.Waddington was appointed to St. Luke's,[19] no clear cut division existed between what later became two separate groups. The appeal met with a hearty response and by the end of the month a large number had united enthusiastically to sing anthems and services.[20]

> Nearly 30 men have put their names down as willing and able to assist in the choral services of the several churches, and the

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18. ibid., 30.9.1863

19. The first mention of his name occurs in L.T. 18.1.1864 in an advertisement for private pupils on the piano and harmonium.

20. P., 11.9.1863 21. ibid., 30.9.1863

> meetings for practice since held have been attended by an average of twenty gentlemen and a like number of boys. Several ladies have also assisted....

The choir's exact position in the city churches at this stage is open to some debate. At least to the end of September, that is for the first four months, they sat in front of the congregations facing east. No separate choir stalls were then built. When a south aisle was added to St. Michael's in late 1863 or early '64 the organ may have been moved down to the west end. Certainly a Barker photograph shows choir stalls placed on either side of the instrument. (Plate 8) If the photograph showing the two prayer book racks in the transept (Plate 9) was taken at the same time (and the cumbersome camera equipment then used would suggest it), we must assume that the men with stronger voices and the boys sat in the "chancel" as a token of established cathedral practice. In a building notorious for its accoustics, the division cannot have worked to the singers' advantage.

Of St. Luke's even less is known. A photograph of the early exterior (Plate 10) shows a barn-like building of two unequal aisles - very similar to St. Michael's. The Riccarton church also bears a close resemblance. An interior view (Plate 11) perhaps over emphasises the closeness but even so space must have been at a premium. A choir coming from St. Michael's had little relief, though by sitting together at the east end they could at least hear the service - something which could not be guaranteed in the far corners of the old pro-cathedral. The sound

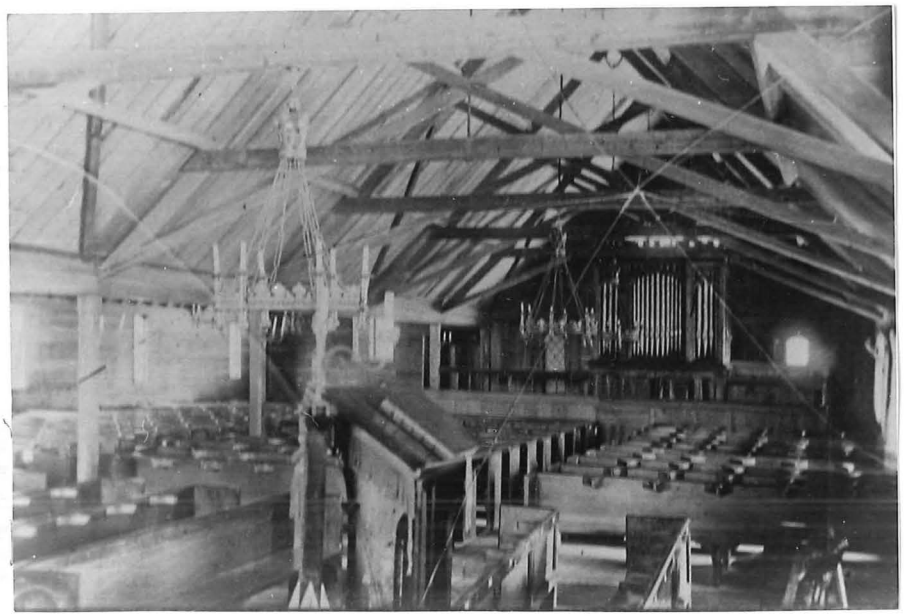

Plate 8: Old St. Michael's, Christchurch;
Bevington organ at west end

Plate 9: Old St. Michael's;,showing
chancel and prayer desks

Plate 10: St. Luke's, c.1864

Plate 11: Interior of Riccarton Church,
12 May, 1871

however, remained just as dead with the low wooden walls and roof and the heavy clothes of the day.

A second area of doubt remains the wearing of surplices. At the laying of the Cathedral's foundation stone in 1864 an unidentified choir, formed probably from the city churches, wore them[22] but this seems an isolated incident. In 1869 at a similar occasion for St. Michael's we are told that the three city parish choirs were all surpliced, at a time when only St. John's, Latimer Square normally used them.[23] Considering the firm newspaper reports detailing the advent of surplices, we must conclude that for the average Sunday service they were not donned except by the clergy. More likely, they were a collection set aside for future use in the cathedral and as hopes for an early completion receded, were later sold.[24]

But by November 1864, after a run of barely ten months, shortcomings in the organisation threatened the life of the choir. At first its seriousness was not fully realised by the public. The education report had immediately created an improvement at the church school, so much so that when a vacancy appeared for a scholarship the following October, eleven boys submitted themselves.[25] In addition five others were granted a free education on condition they accepted the normal

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22. ibid., 17.22.1864 23. ibid., 30.9.1870

24. Surplices and cassocks were among items imported in 1881 for the cathedral services. NZCN, July, 1881, p.532

25. The Reading Scholarship went to Master Strange from the High Street. L.T., 15.10.1864

responsibilities of choirboys.

There are two reasons which could explain this unusual move by the clergy. First that the original high hopes for the choir had become tempered and the placing of seven boys on a permanent role was a bid by the authorities to recover some lost prestige. By making the incentives more freely available a greater number of boys would be encouraged to join the ranks of the volunteers. But the real issue lay in the tougher economic times that were looming ahead. The granting of free schooling with regular church attendance was a bid to attract boys of deserving parents struggling financially.

The existence of only two scholarships severely dashed the early prospects of a cathedral choir. Yet it was symptomatic of the whole rather amateurish manner in which the music had been arranged. The root of the trouble lay in the almost glib unpreparedness with which the church authorities launched their scheme.

From its inception a lack of adequate supplies of music was felt. Ten years previously the church had had much to go on and even if multiple copies for a large choir never existed, there were at least enough to suffice for a while. But during the intervening period this music had been lost, borrowed and thrown away, inevitable perhaps in those early days of inadequate storage and infrequent usage. To remedy this, Bilton and the choral classes relied on private resources at first, especially in the way of hymnals and psalters (as these were without pointing or chants and ordinary

prayer book would often fill the need). Sometimes a few simple anthems such as the "Italian Chorale" or Whitfield's more interesting "In Jewry is God known" were sung with pleasing results and the familiar oratorios, Messiah, St. Paul and Elijah each yielded suitable excerpts. Most singers had their own private copies of these latter works. But the familiar was no diet for an aspiring choir; fresh music was wanted.

To obtain copies from England was a lengthy business, apart from the cost. An order took a minimum of six months travelling, if sailings were conveniently favourable and no mishaps intervened; then allowing another couple of months for administration and delays, upwards of a year could elapse before the music was finally delivered. Often one bought blindly and atandard practice, even well into the 'eighties, was to wait until someone with a knowledge of local musical conditions returned to England. Given these conditions the authorities can perhaps be excused for not ordering the music when the singers demanded it - after formation.[26] The real error lay in not placing an order long before establishing the choir, for such a protracted delay, once the venture had begun, courted disaster. As it happened it indeed contributed to the final collapse.

However scarcity of music alone did not cause the apathy that quickly spread over the attempt. To attain a true cathedral choir, one fully robed and singing all parts of the service for the

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26. P., 30.9.1863

congregation, would impose a heavy financial burden. Yet this difficulty was naively dismissed. Had the scholarships succeeded they might have given impetus to greater striving, but with choir finances governed almost completely by the uncertainties of voluntary giving of the congregation, it was hard not see the local failures repeating themselves. Hook had found the same problem in England.[27]

After two years, the remains seemed dull indeed. The ave defied all calls for increased responsiveness;[28] instead of being spurred on by the choir, the congregation became more passive. Regular worshippers agreed that there was no church feeling in Christchurch; one parishioner retorted it was absolutely dead.

Tight conditions outside gave no encouragement. In 1864 unmistakable signs of a depression appeared and by April of the following year people idle in the streets indicated unemployment. The church also felt the squeeze. Proposals to start on the walls of the cathedral, the inspiration of the choir's existance, were dropped till better times and with the concrete flooring only partly completed, the site epitomised the surrounding despondency.

The depression affected not only growth but also harmed what progress had been made. By 1866 St. Michael's was over £900 in debt. Choir morale

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27. "After the maintenance of the choir was thus made dependent on voluntary subscription, its efficiency waned, and when Dr. Hook arrived at Leeds in 1837 he found the surplices in rags, and the service books in tatters." Rainbow, op.cit., p.27

28. C.Q., July, 1866, pp.9-13

too was low and became reflected in its casual attitude. Although details are not known, Bilton's musical arrangements for the November Diocesan Synod service were considered "very defective".[29] Disillusioned, he resigned in the new year.

Bilton's stay at St. Michael's can only be considered a tragedy. Evidently Jackson had thought highly of him but whatever his capabilities as a performer, he lacked drive and initiative. By nature shy and retiring, he foundered when called upon to provide the leadership on expected from the first church of the diocese. St. Luke's and Lyttelton, receiving no guidence from him after 1863, went their own way.

Joseph Carder, a former choirmaster of Holy Trinity, managed the Lyttelton Institute's music classes and under him the series were soon pronounced a "great success".[30] The renewed interest in singing inevitably resulted in changes to the church choir and, as at St. Michael's before, a number of adults, men and women, volunteered to augment the few rows of boys that had hitherto kept up the hymns and psalms.

Not long afterwards an advertisement appeared in the Lyttelton Times detailing the music of the Sunday's choral services. (Plate 12) It was the first of its kind in the province - even perhaps in New Zealand - and since there was no feast day or anniversary to celebrate, the only explanation lies in the enthusiasm of the new choir, optimistic over their future. Canticles to single and double

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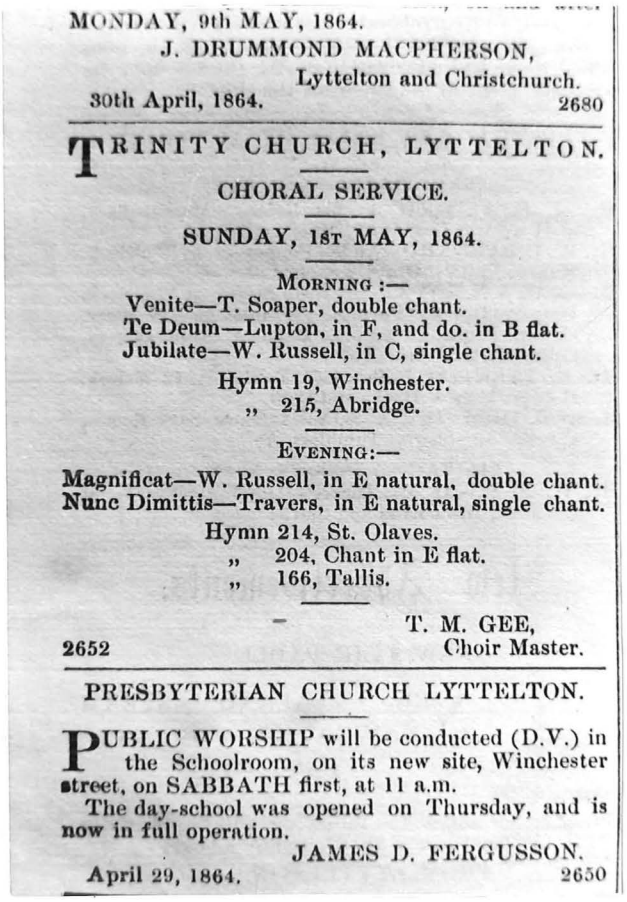
29. ibid., 22.4.1866 30. ibid., 16.4.1864



MONDAY, 9th MAY, 1864.

J. DRUMMOND MACPHERSON,
Lyttelton and Christchurch.

30th April, 1864. 2680

TRINITY CHURCH, LYTTELTON.

CHORAL SERVICE.

SUNDAY, 1ST MAY, 1864.

MORNING :—
Venite—T. Soaper, double chant.
Te Deum—Lupton, in F, and do. in B flat.
Jubilate—W. Russell, in C, single chant.

Hymn 19, Winchester.
„ 215, Abridge.

EVENING:—
Magnificat—W. Russell, in E natural, double chant.
Nunc Dimittis—Travers, in E natural, single chant.

Hymn 214, St. Olaves.
„ 204, Chant in E flat.
„ 166, Tallis.

T. M. GEE,
2652 Choir Master.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LYTTELTON.

PUBLIC WORSHIP will be conducted (D.V.) in the Schoolroom, on its new site, Winchester street, on SABBATH first, at 11 a.m.

The day-school was opened on Thursday, and is now in full operation.

JAMES D. FERGUSSON.
April 29, 1864. 2650

Plate 12: Lyttelton choir advertisement in Lyttelton Times, 30 April, 1864

Anglican chants and hymns were sung, the psalms presumably being recited and no anthem was performed. Unpretentious it may have been but it demonstrates how the choir regarded their position.

Understandably a young and promising group desired something more than the inadequate sound of a harmonium to accompany them. In London parishes over the past decade as choirs had sprung into fashion, old organs had been restored and new ones erected. The settlement was now seeing the same developments. (At St. Luke's a subscription was started in 1863.) The instrument was entertained not wholly for its religious connotations[31] but because its tone would add attractiveness to the service. Rippling arpeggios and full diapason chords imparted a new status to the singers as well as enabling more attractive works to be sung.

As early as 1863 Knowles had argued the n necessity of an organ. General opinion seemed to agree[32] and within twelve months, largely through the exertions of the choral class, a hundred pounds was raised.[33] By February, just two months before the fourth anniversary, workers unloaded a small one manual pipe organ at the wharf and carted it up to the church where it was assembled in the north transept.

The opening services were crowded. The choir, boosted by extra musical support, gave full vent to displaying their keenness and the excellence of

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31. Knowles echoed contemporary thinking when he remarked the organ could "drawone's thoughts heavenward". ibid., 27.4.1865

32. ibid., 18.4.1864 33. ibid., 12.4.1864

their organ. Little scope for exhibiting either was offered by Jackson's Te Deum but under the combined playing and direction of their new choirmaster and organist, W.H.Flood, they presented Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" as an anthem with resounding success.

For the next five years little is known except that the congregation succumbed to the tyranny of the organ. Had the clergy foreseen it they might well have hesitated before buying the instrument. Their aim had been to stimulate congregational singing by increasing the volume of the accompaniment. As it happened, the choir became more efficient in their role of singing the hymns and psalms, without aspiring to anything greater, while both Knowles and Harper found themselves urging the congregation not to abdicate their part in the service music.[34]

St. Luke's had one great advantage over Lyttelton that was vital to growth: it was a city parish and therefore involved in the progress then taking place. Though musically weaker than the two neighbouring ones, St. Michael's and St. John's, this church exhibits another fact of Anglican life. St. Michael's derived its importance from being the pro-cathedral and therefore at the head of the diocese. St. John's, as will be shown, remained throughout the years of influence, a fashionable centre. St. Luke's beginning humbly as an overflow church from St. Michael's never became anything more than an ordinary, if not at times a rather outmoded, parish. This delineation

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34. ibid., 4.5.1866

of character started almost from its beginning in 1863.

Whatever the original degree of choir union with St. Michael's, separate organisation became inevitable. Virtual autonomy was reflected in the general parish life for, being hewn out of Avonside and Papanui parishes, St. Luke's attracted the more conservative. Now under the impetus of the 1863 new era, offertories could support an assistant curate.[35] J.C.Bagshaw was appointed and Waddington's tenure as organist and choirmaster began shortly after.[36]

Waddington seems to have been fully aware of the limits of the choir. He had singleness of mind for the parish situation was always clearly in sight. There was no ambition to institute an ambivilent cathedral practice for neither were the means available nor did the incumbent and his parishioners really desire such a service. Those who did walked over to the other churches. Consequently we are told that the congregation joined with the choir and sang as one voice.[37]

The choir did not drive themselves with the ambition to perform difficult and over elaborate music as others tended. Waddington encouraged members to listen to each other when singing so that exhibitionism was avoided as much as possible. Here there were no anthems with solo parts,

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35. P., 28.11.1863

36. Waddington had been a teacher at the Royal Acadamy of Music in London.

37. L.T., 1.11.1864

preferring simple chants and hymns sung to a harmony that discouraged prominent voices. Similarly, under Waddington the organ never usurped the choir's position. The common criticism of the organist "stifling good voices with a pedantic display of his ability"[38] did not hold true at St. Luke's. His accompaniments, noted for their "plainness and softness", always served the words.

How then do these two parishes, St. Luke's and Lyttelton, shed light on the demise of the St. Michael's choir?

First, they show that in both Christchurch and Lyttelton there was much activity centred on church choir work, to the extent that the energy and attention needed to form a cathedral choir was squandered in the various efforts of the parishes. The plethora of local choral societies that came and went during the nineteenth century bore testimony to this harmful division where no one person was strong enough to lead the groups forward. The 'sixties to this extent, can be seen as a transitional period between the rawness of the early settlement and the more stable conditions of a colony in its second generation.

It was this lack of real leadership that brings us to the second point. In Canterbury and Christchurch in particular there was no feeling that a diocese had been formed. In atmosphere the pre-1857 attitude still largely existed, of a collection of unconnected churches.

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38. ibid., 20.5.1865

Independence in all things, not least in schooling and place of worship, still dominated the people's lives. The control and discipline, imperative to the working of a large city, were also needed in the construction of a cathedral and until this had evolved, any attempts to form a cathedral choir would be still-born. Time was necessary to finance the expensive project and the limited resources of such a small town were incapable of supporting, let alone creating, what was in effect an expensive luxury. Hence the less flambuoyant parish efforts at Lyttelton and St. Luke's survived.

A third reason is seen in the haste with which the almost simplistic design was conceived and later, it would seem, relinquished. When the organisers proceeded largely by rule of thumb, finance enters in for such measures are expensive. The lack of preparation for adequate musical supplies, the bad judgement as to the true temper of the times, and the complacency of the Church's educational system all point to a naively over-confident scheme to realise a sophisticated and complex objective. The second and eventually successful choir - at the fashionable masonic church at St. John's - to form a true cathedral system drew on the wide experience of far better qualified people at a stage when a decade's prosperity and immigration fostered a conducive ethos.

3
The New Zealand Hymnal

In 1859, two years after the Constitution of the New Zealand Church was signed, the first General Synod met in Wellington. The conference represented the whole country and the full society of the Church - bishops, clergy and laity. Their aim was to weld the diverse elements within the provinces into a single body; to put an end to the total absence of co-operation among the separate dioceses. It was within this framework that a scheme for a national hymnal, to hold equal rank with the Book of Common Prayer, was put forward by the Rev. J.C.Bagshaw.

The principle was not new. Seven years previously the Rev. John Albert Fenton had published a small compilation of forty hymns for use in his Otago parish hoping that this would encourage much larger efforts in the field. As he wrote in the preface, he wanted Convocation to prepare a hymn book and authorise its use to the exclusion of all others.[1] It was a step by a young clergyman, then newly graduated from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, to stimulate more hearty singing than Tate and Brady would permit.

Administration and financial difficulties during the 'fifties halted any further move but by 1859 the hindrances, though by no means cleared, had considerably lessened. And at Wellington,

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1. Hocken, T.M., A Bibliography of the Literature Relating to New Zealand, Wellington, 1909, p.165

equidistant from all parts of the country, and hence the most suitable meeting point for the Synod, the matter was to be aired again, this time on a national scale.

Bagshaw had already experienced opposition to the book used at Avonside. Watts' hymns were generally considered a relic of a bygone era (in England publication had tailed off as early as 1816) and the other, the almost universally used Tate and Brady, could only be considered passable. Already the multitude of small hymn books similar to Fenton's, then prevalent in English parishes, told of a similar dissatisfaction and of an inability to tackle the problem in the home country. No one wanted the situation repeated out here and it was only common sense that reform should take place before allegiences to separate specialized books became hardened. Therefore when Bagshaw, supported by Auckland's Archdeacon Kissling, advocated that a hymnal adapted to New Zealand's circumstances should be enforced throughout the whole country, the time was well judged.

The Synod envisaged a book which would follow the usual pattern: at first a volume containing only the words would suffice with traditional tunes being sung and played from one of the standard collections then available.[2] Editorship would be in the hands of a committee whose choice finally depended for approval on the bishops. Once passed the hymnal would then become the sole authorised book for use in New Zealand.

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2. See notes to Appendix B.

The stress on authorisation was unusual - not even the hymnals most widely used in England were given such importance. But a young colony was different: it lacked the resources though not the will for individual books, and past errors in England, resulting from well-intentioned but haphazard reforms, had not accumulated here into monstrous proportions. More importantly though, one authorised hymnal would focus attention on the Church's national identity. Where tradition and ceremony in all fields was by and large unquestionably accepted at home, informality often reigned in New Zealand. Many services around the country were held not in city churches but in sheep barns or in the large central room of a farmhouse. In this situation where few ordained clergy could be present, the worship consisted of hymns, psalms and prayers, and possibly ending with a sermon read from one of the numerous publications. Indeed a single hymn book here would do more to promote a national corporateness than any loosely read prayer book or individual collection of hymns.

However, recalcitrant laity in the South Island had mixed feelings over a North Island proposal. An amendment by Bishop Harper tried to lengthen the time during which the selection of words would be made. He suggested a separate committee be appointed to investigate the whole matter, a written report to be finally submitted to the various synods. The bishops and a greater part of the laity accepted this cautious approach but the clergy, in charge of the parish situation and best qualified through first hand experience,

pressed for faster results. Consequently they failed to reach agreement and the issue was formally shelved.[3]

The Bishops of the Wellington, Nelson and Christchurch dioceses, disappointed though not without hope for a future breakthrough, met for further talks and by the beginning of 1860 William Mercer's Church Psalter and Hymn Book had been recommended for the whole of the South Island.[4] The choice showed much sense. Ever since its first publication in 1854 it had proved extremely popular in England, for parish and cathedral alike - St. Paul's, London was to use it for twenty years. The large numbers already printed made for cheapness, something which a locally printed or sponsored venture could not hope to achieve. Novel features were the tunes printed above the words (it was the first influential hymn book to have this arrangement - a sign of cheaper methods of music printing and of a greater popular knowledge of notation) and the pointed psalms which tended to prevent the untidy chanting customary even among trained choirs. But Harper, busy on a pastoral tour of South Canterbury and Otago and perhaps aware of more promising moves elsewhere, subtly "forgot" to order a shipment,[5] and another attempt came to an abrupt halt.

Auckland was making the progress, for there, work on updating and enlarging a local hymnal

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3. Proceedings of the First General Synod, 1859, pp. 26-27

4. Church Minute Book of Lyttelton, 25.1.1860, p.89

5. ibid., p.92

was sufficiently advanced for that collection to be put before the various diocesan synods. In Christchurch Harper urged its acceptance[6] and at the 1862 General Synod a decision gave the English firm of Collins right of publication. One year's wait was rewarded by an announcement declaring the

> Hymn book authorised by the General Synod has been printed by direction of the Standing Committee and will shortly be in general use throughout the Province of Canterbury. The tune book is ready and it is proposed to lithograph a number of copies for temporary use in order that the tunes may be tried and alterations made before the book is permanently printed.[7]

Despite the forward looking venture. the New Zealand Hymnal was modelled on tradition, perhaps even old-fashioned lines. The 222 hymns without their music were arranged, not according to the Church's calender, but from January to December, allotment depending on the importance of the particular day. Choice varied between two for Easter Eve and fourteen for the first Sunday in Advent; eleven saints' days were recognised. With each Sunday's hymns prescribed, the system theoretically promoted a wide overall coverage of limited number but in practice it was the old that were repeatedly chosen. This was a natural tendency but one fostered also by the difficulty of mating unusual and often clumsy metres of translations to available tunes. Not until the second edition of 1871 did modernisation come. Following the example of Hymns Ancient and Modern

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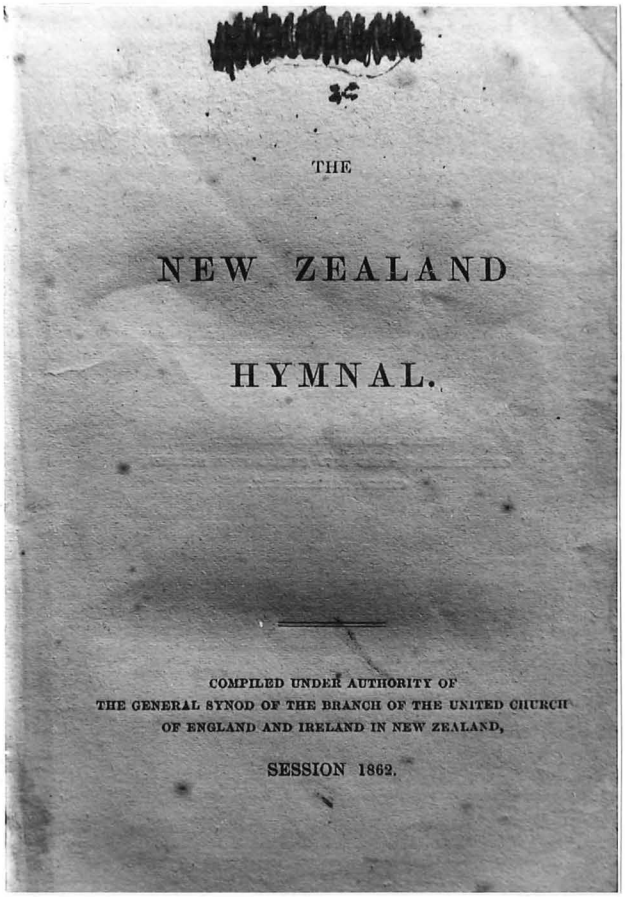
6. L.T., 5.6.1861
7. C.Q.P., October, 1863, p.20



THE

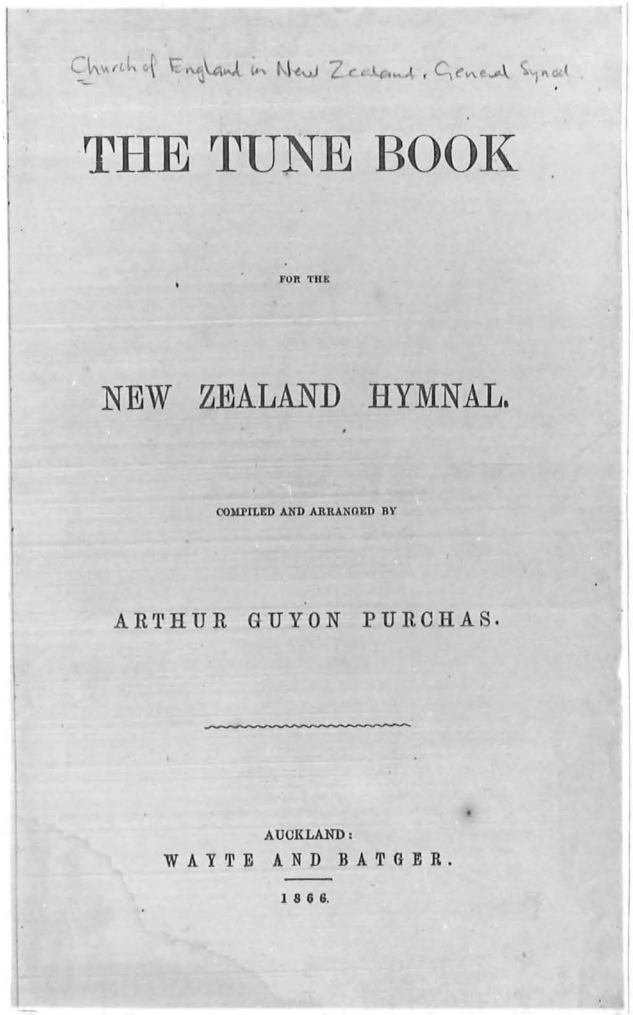
NEW ZEALAND

HYMNAL.

COMPILED UNDER AUTHORITY OF
THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE BRANCH OF THE UNITED CHURCH
OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND IN NEW ZEALAND,

SESSION 1862.

Plate 13: New Zealand Hymnal, 1864,
Title page



Church of England in New Zealand. General Synod.

THE TUNE BOOK

FOR THE

NEW ZEALAND HYMNAL.

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

ARTHUR GUYON PURCHAS.

AUCKLAND:
WAYTE AND BATGER.
1866.

Plate 14: Tune Book for the New Zealand Hymnal, 1866, Title page

(1861), an expanded book was organised by church seasons and the appropriate tune printed at the head of each hymn.

But even with its short-comings, the book of 1862 met initially with general approval, one reviewer remarking on the good taste of the hymns and their concordance with Prayer Book doctrines. As with all Victorian criticisms of music, art and literature, cut-and-dried rules for the composition of such books inevitably appeared and this reviewer noted with alacrity that the New Zealand Hymnal complied with those set down by Sir J. Roundell Palmer's Book of Praise (1862). This was a source book, one not designed for congregational use but aimed at providing authoritative texts, both complete and original, of the Church's hymns. Palmer's preface outlined the criteria by which all words should be judged.

> A good hymn should have simplicity, fulness and reality of feeling; elevation of tone and a rhythm easy and harmonious, but not jingling or trivial. Its language may be homely, but should not be slovenly or mean. Affectation or visible artifice is worse than excess of homliness; a hymn is easily spoiled by a high falsetto note, nor will the most exemplary soundness of doctrine atone for doggerel, or redeem from failure a prosaic, didactic style.[8]

The Hymnal, that is with words only, was concerned with achieving universal acceptance within New Zealand, not with stressing a new party line. In some respects it was well up to the times. It took due notice of the German and Latin

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8. quoted in C.Q.P., July, 1865, pp.8-11

hymns that were now coming into vogue yet still contained a large proportion of English ones familiar to many congregations. But other features reflected an older style, one that Christchurch was gradually spurning. Many in the diocese realised it was adopted as a political gesture rather than for any intrinsic value its verses may have had; their literary sentiments were generally looked on as cold and uninteresting. Others, including Bagshaw, preferred the far wider choice in Mercer's four hundred hymns, though in style they were often dubbed as unsatisfactory.[9]

The Tune Book of 1866 was largely the work of Arthur Guyon Purchas, incumbent of St. Peter's, Heretonga.[10] of the 222 tunes he compiled and arranged, 116 were German chorales and ancient church melodies; the rest came from English composers (eight were by himself). Thus he copied overseas practice which during the 'fifties had seen a steady increase in the adoption of these particular foreign sources. The extent of his editing is difficult to guage as an intended analytical dictionary never appeared but it seems likely that most were harmonically altered and not always to their best advantage, even by contemporary standards. The popular "St Anne's" was weakened through his modulation and chords of the first inversion.

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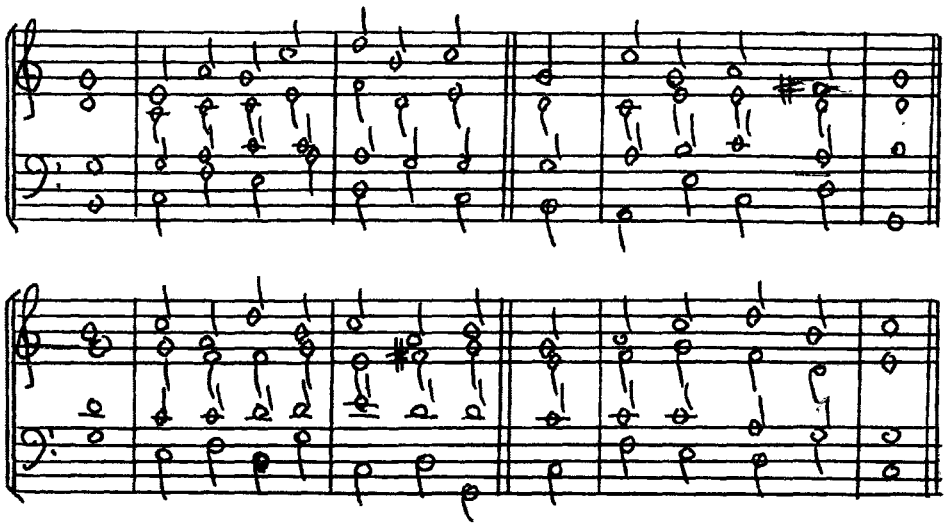
9. Julian, John, Dictionary of Hymnology, New York, 1957, article on "Mercer".

10. See Appendix B.

"St. Anne's"



However at first the new hymn book gained currency and was widely used throughout all New Zealand dioceses. By 1865, still a year before the Tune Book came out, over seven thousand copies had been sold.[11] If the slow but steady success continued then the high price of two shillings for the hard covered edition could be reduced. But its reign in the South Island was already being curtailed. Later in that year Nelson reverted to Mercer while in Christchurch its merits were being hotly debated.

The rejection of the Hymnal in the Canterbury diocese falls into two periods:

1. 1865-1867 when the book, though continuing in most churches, was subjected to mounting criticism.

2. 1867-1871 The gradual ascendancy of Hymns Ancient and Modern, revealing deeper reasons underlying the change.

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11. L.T., 29.4.1865

The 1865 General Synod was divided over the issue. Though the book had been praised for its aesthetic tone, some, like the Rev. J.F.Lloyd (Auckland), wanted revision for the sake of authenticity in the light of Palmer's book; the Bishops of Waiapu and Wellington were amongst those quite satisfied with the hymnal as it now appeared. The Canterbury clergy as a whole clamoured for a well-established English hymnal.[12] The end was a deadlock and no change resulted. However the Christchurch Diocesan Synod of 1866 made some progress on the matter and managed to conclude with a measure of unanimity.

Over a two day debate not a good word was said for the New Zealand Hymnal. The Rev. J.O.B.Hoare (St. John's, Latimer Square) made the most trenchant criticisms. It was "detructive of congregational singing", the music did nothing to improve the words and the cost was exhorbitant. The best that could be said in its favour, remarked Dean Jacobs, was that it contained nothing objectionable. He for one would prefer Hymns Ancient and Modern. "It had the merit", he quipped, "of being attacked by Bishop Colenso and defended by Dean Stanley." What more could be asked?

At first little headway was made for the Bishop was anxious to avoid any further experimentation and upheaval, especially as a smaller rival group had appeared, led by B.W.Dudley and the Rev. E.A.Lingard. Its members favoured Mercer,[3] a book Lingard already used at St. Luke's. Not until the third day was agreement reached. Hoare asked

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12. ibid.; P., 11.5.1865 13. ibid., 27.11.1866

for a committee to report to the next general synod the diocese's dissatisfaction and urge the national body to authorise an acceptable English alternative. The motion passed.[14]

1867 saw a softening of the official line. Hoping for a solution out of the Bishop's forthcoming visit to the Lambeth Conference, some clergy brought up the issue at the mid-year synod. In response to a cry for the same latitude given to the English clergy in such matters, Harper admitted that though he personally favoured one book, individual choices could not be forbidden.[15] With this statement the gate was left wide open and the first period draws to a close.

The turning point toward action was this 1867 decision which gave clergy limited freedom in the selection of hymn books. St. Luke's announced its adoption of Hymns Ancient and Modern shortly afterwards. Despite earlier support for Mercer and amid protests from the more reactionary elements in his parish, Lingard realised that the future lay with this hymnal.[16]

Official support for the New Zealand Hymnal continued to wane. When a supplement arrived two years later, the Bishop could only "strongly recommend" it; he refused unless commanded by the general synod to order its use.[17] St. Michael's out of politeness as the pro-cathedral, was the only church still using the book,[18] but though the

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14. ibid., 1.12.1866 15. ibid., 20.6.1867
16. L.T., 18.7.1867; 31.7.1867
17. ibid., 6.11.1869 18. ibid., 4.3.1869

Supplement gave wider choice, neither cost nor ease of handling were improved. The 1871 General Synod, seeing the South Island's position was irrevocable, sanctioned the use of Hymns Ancient and Modern in any parish.[19] The last barrier of officialdom now torn away, St. Michael's took in Ancient and Modern with Appendix (1868) during July.[20] That book was now used in all city churches and as far afield as Rangiora, Flaxton, Timaru, and All Saint's, Hokitika. The Church News jubilantly summed up

> It will be a great advantage to have only one book used in the diocese and it is some satisfaction to know that the A & M collection has won its way solely on account of its superior merits. It is also published at a marvellously low price. The hymns with Appendix can be had from one penny and with the music one and eightpence. We would call attention to both the beauty of the words and the tunes of the hymns for children /something the New Zealand Hymnal ommitted/ and point out that when A & M is used, it is not necessary to have a second hymn book for the Sunday School.[21]

The reasons for the downfall of the New Zealand Hymnal are not wholly derogatory for it arrived not only at a time of intense competition in this field but also during an early period when life in this country had not stabilized to the extent a long term venture could survive.

The ultimate cause of failure of St. Michael's "New Era" - the immaturity of the city - was not

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19. NZCN, Feb., 1871, p.7
20. L.T., 18.4.1871; 30.5.1871
21. NZCN, June, 1871, p.2

confined to Christchurch. In the early 'sixties New Zealand as a whole neither thought nor acted as a unified nation. The colonial spirit of individual settlements still held and was unconsciously absorbed into the general synods. As has been shown, when strong issues were at stake, the diversity of opinion in an open forum left no room for movement. Only at the local diocesan level could progress be made.

The publication in 1862 of a national hymnal was timely in that it came as a response to a new national awareness. But at another level it was premature. Because insufficient thought had been given, it resulted in high costs from small production numbers and caused the continual "patching and doctoring" that went on afterwards.[22] At no one stage did the book ever achieve complete domination. Even after Harper acquired approval for its use in Canterbury he insisted that a local edition[23] be printed with the final alterations carried out by himself. No copy of this has come to light and it may not have been printed.

Second, the publication could not stand comparison with those overseas hymnals already mentioned and then in use in Christchurch. The paper was cheap, the print poor, the binding weak and it gave only a limited choice of hymns - on average, a mere four every Sunday. But the biggest drawback lay in the format of separate words and music. Other manuals could be used but the high

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22. L.T., 11.5.1865

23. Ward and Reeves of Christchurch were to be the publishers.

number of unusual metres made difficult the mating of words to other tunes.[24]

Third, no attempt was made to publicize and sell the hymn book. Its supporters assumed that it would simply be accepted without effort on their part. Something should have been learnt from the arrangements made in England for the appearance of Hymns Ancient and Modern in 1861. In both instances the aim was to reduce the diversity of hymnals currently in use. But the editors of Ancient and Modern realised that in order to gain uniformity, others had to be willingly sacrificed and to this end co-operation was sought and obtained. As other hymnals were drawn on, the various contributors agreed to drop their own compilations and use the new.

Little thought was given to public relations for the New Zealand attempt. Canterbury having the greatest proportion of Anglicans as well as being the oldest separate diocese should have been consulted more often. As it was the South Island already had two very servicable hymn books in partial use and the imposition of a third (and poorer one) was bound to be met with ill-feeling.

Julian gives three reasons for the success of Hymns Ancient and Modern: publication arrangements, a title both general and popular, and the controversy over it supposedly High Church attitudes.[25] The

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24. One letter of complaint drew attention to Hymn 5 with the metre 9.8.8.8.9.8.6.6.4.8.8. NZCN, July, 1871, p.7

25. Julian, op.cit., I, pp.338-339

latter he considers was generally misplaced for what was old in the way of tunes and hymns had been in use for a long time before. It popularity was therefore neither musical nor literary but irrational like changes in fashion.

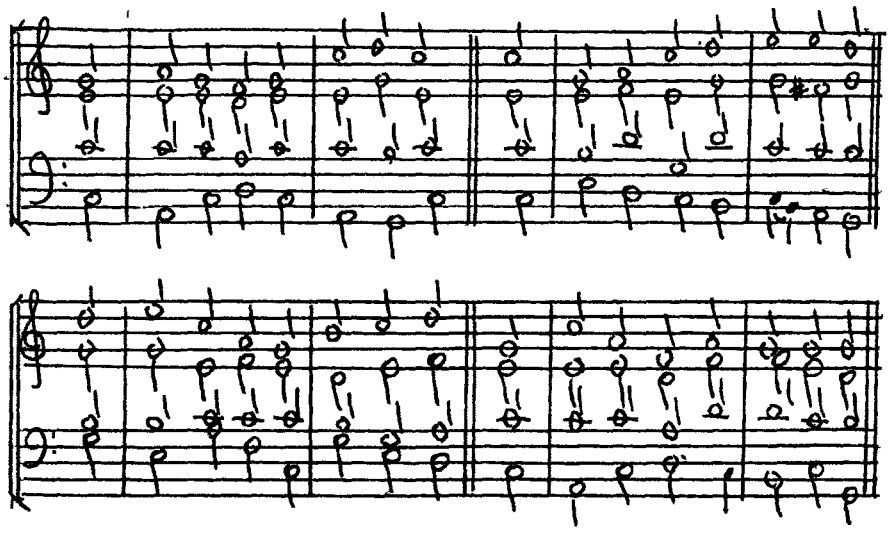
In Canterbury its adoption was only one of the manifestations of a change in taste and to account for what actually happened we must return to 1867, a pivotal year in the history of Canterbury hymnals and in the economic fortunes of the province.

In that year the worst depression the settlement had yet experienced reached its nadir. As was to happen after the long slump during the 'eighties, what emerged was a changed atmosphere. Christchurch ceased to be a settlement and became a town; its people found a greater sense of corporateness in all aspects of life - social, economic and religious. The period of prosperity looming before them would bring vitality in church affairs - not least in its music. Pre-1866 seemed remote; now the colony had found itself and instead of looking back, the initiative was seen in those who adopted up-to-date views. The New Zealand Hymnal failed to make allowance for a more progressive churchmanship - one which accepted at a very moderate level some of the innovations of the Tractarians.

A few signs were seen before 1867 it is true. The plainsong "Veni Creator" had been sung to a metrical psalm in St. Michael's during 1864. It did not approach Helmore's standard of authenticity being harmonised and accompanied but it was a

start to the later use of Gregorians. Christmas

"Veni Creator"



decorations in the churches were noted for the first time that year while the most radical innovation appeared at Avonside where B.W.Mountfort elevated the chancel by three steps.[26]

But in 1867 the real change started in earnest when the activities of the English ritualists received widespread coverage in the daily papers during January. The detail of the services at S. Michael's, Shoreditch, S. Peter's-in-the-East and S. Alban's, Holborn spread their controversy to the Lyttelton Times. One writer argued that while "ritualism is unknown in Christchurch", its advocates have only to bide their time before "they will obtain the full musical services in which they so delight."[27] - a prophetic sentence.

This interest was reflected in the local

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26. L.T., 13.12.1864; 14.1.1865; 2.3.1866
27. ibid., 8.1.1867

churches and their services: greater emphasis was placed on the sacraments at the expense of preaching, a shortened, more modern sermon of fifteen to twenty minutes made its appearance while the sanctuary received new attention. Altars with frontals, candles, flowers and, though very much later, a central cross, were replacing the bare "Holy Table" with the Prayer Book at the north end;[28] weekly communion services commenced at St. Michael's with an evening celebration on the fifth Sunday.[29] Holy days achieved more prominence and their was a official plea for people to kneel for prayers instead of the customary sitting.[30] In 1868 during Passion Week, daily evening services began at St. John's, Latimer Square, Hoare preaching on the Seven Words from the Cross.[31] The year before, "appropriate anthems" were sung in all Anglican churches at Christmas time.[32]

Against this background the New Zealand Hymnal seemed a relic of past times. An enterprising attempt but nevertheless, outmoded. The sweet emotive chromaticisms espoused by Dykes, Barnby and Stainer, when allied to hymns noted for their "tenderness of feeling", plaintive simplicity" and "deep devotion" appealed to the religious sentiments of the coming age. The adoption of Hymns Ancient and Modern was a step towards brighter services and a rejection of the old settlement's standards in worship. North Island dioceses continued to

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28. ibid., 1.12.1868 29. ibid., 22.10.1870
30. C.Q.P., Oct., 1866 pp.9-12
31. L.T., 6.4.1868 32. ibid., 4.1.1868

use the New Zealand book because this change of climate had not yet come to them. In this instance the formation of surpliced choirs can give a valid indication as to how far ahead Christchurch was in church practices: they were introduced to Wellington in 1879, Auckland in 1885; here in Christchurch in 1865.

4

The Choral Breakthrough

St. John's

1865 - 1869

> "There is and can be no service nowadays without music being the first and necessary condition.... A church without hymns is no church at all, and a church pretending to be Catholic without hymns is a perfect satire on the term."
>
> "Church Music of the Future", in Lyttelton Times, 9.1.1869

Samuel Butler set foot on Canterbury soil in 1860 and found few pretensions to culture; his now famous retort that "it does not do to speak about John Sebastian Bach's 'Fugues' or pre-Raphaelite pictures" epitomised the atmosphere. But during the early 'sixties this climate gradually changed and attempts to form permanent church choirs together with the various reasons that lay behind the moves, have been cited as one instance of this trend. These developments however, failed to fulfil original hopes and it was left for succeeding ventures to take root and flourish.

If Butler had arrived only fifteen years later his verdict might well have been different. By then the town was clearly reaping the fruits of economic prosperity and a growing population. Red letter days like those festivals of the newly established Diocesan Choral Association pointed to a new stability resembling the provincial atmosphere of a small English town. This progress was not confined to music; if one looks towards

the visual arts a few key events clearly mark off the years of frustration from those of success.

1860	Butler arrives and finds conversation distinctly rural.
1861	Philosophical Institute of Canterbury formed by Haast.
1863	Society of Arts formed but dissolves after a few meetings.
1865	N.Z.Exhibition at Dunedin - had 300 paintings exhibited but none from Canterbury.
1866	Provincial Council's grant of £2,000 to Chevalier to make sketches of Canterbury.
1867	First public statue erected - the Godley statue in Cathedral Square.
	A. Resticaux, a professional wood engraver, opened a shop in Durham Street.
1870	Museum opened by Haast, containing exhibits of animals and fauna, photos and paintings of the remoter regions of the South Island.
1871	W.B.Armson forms Canterbury Association of Architects.
1872	Canterbury College founded.
1873	Work started again Cathedral walls and continues till opened in 1882.
1874	Canterbury Library opened, housing books formerly held in Colonists' Association Rooms and various other lending clubs.
1880	Canterbury Society of Arts constituted under the same committee as the 1873 Society - included many strong Anglicans.
1882	School of Art established.
	International Exhibition held in Christchurch.

After early short-lived attempts, the 1866 grant indicates a first tentative step towards

public recognition of the arts, a move strengthened the following year on the civic level with the Godley statue, on the domestic by the woodwork shop. With the 'seventies another phase begins, one concerned with expansion at a provincial level. Armson's Association and the Cathedral work point to a new prosperity and a desire to replace the makeshift buildings of pioneering days with more ambitious and permanent structures. Finally with full maturity in 1882, the Art School and International Exhibition clothes aesthetics in a respectability born of mass approval.

Similar developments occur in the rising popularity and awareness of music. Though Butler would perhaps heap scorn on much that was done in the name of Culture (e.g. even a truncated version of Bach's St. Matthew Passion was not performed until 1877), to deny any popular enthusiasm for the arts in general and music in particular after 1870 would have been impossible. Nowhere is this trend more clearly demonstrated than in the rise of church choirs throughout the diocese.

During the late 'fifties and early 'sixties small churches arose in the communities sprinkled alongside the main transport routes. Gradu lly these spread into the countryside. If their church facilities offered little more than the domestic rooms they supplanted at least the presence of a building set aside for worship signified one step away from settlement life. In places like Opawa, Heathcote, Papanui, Riccarton and Kaiapoi, Sunday morning services resounded to the congregation singing hymns and even perhaps the Gloria to the proper psalms and canticles.

Often their heartiness would drown out the wheezing strains of the frantically pedalled harmonium. In these churches neither space nor resources permitted a choir and the innovations at Christchurch, Lyttelton and Rangiora were not emulated elsewhere. Nothing further is heard from Avonside for ten years. Nevertheless, if by the end of 1864 the glamour of the two main churches, St. Michael's and Holy Trinity, had faded considerably, the completion of St. John's, Latimer Square, the following year heralded a new development on a much larger scale.

Its birth was propitious for it came at the beginning of a rapid change in taste, which in turn reflected on the conduct of the services. Whereas the choral developments at St. Michael's belong to an earlier pioneering spirit, those at St. John's are entrenched firmly in the new period. The old choir ideals relied on the good will and co-operation of people; St. John's is unique in that five years before other churches re-developed their musical services, she had embarked on a serious and determined course to build up a choir fully within the Broad Church tradition of Jebb and Wesley. Launched then with what was the finest church building in Canterbury, if not in New Zealand, the parishioners not only had the means but also the desire to make the church a show place of modern Anglicanism.

If a parallel is to be drawn one must return to the Lyttelton church of 1860 rather than to the other two city churches. Just as the stone walls of Holy Trinity signified the coming of age of the port, so now could the plain point with justifiable pride at its new efforts. Entering the buildings

the appointment of choir stalls and organ drew attention to the progress - one already hinted at in the adoption of Hymns Ancient and Modern - achieved by each community. But the individual fortunes of the two churches also reflect the changing relationships between the centres. Whereas Lyttelton, despite her original ambition, was reduced by force of circumstances almost to a nonentity in diocesan circles within five years, the same time span enabled St. John's to consolidate its position as the leading church; it had taken a decade to realise Holy Trinity, St. John's was occupied in two short years.

But the phenomenom at St. John's has a wider parallel. It was part of a larger, pan-Anglican development. In the diocese the pattern of Anglican worship was changing towards greater elaboration. One can now see that the settlement had reached a stage where trends could follow established lines in England without being bent by pioneering restrictions. Admittedly isolation was still a serious problem and would not disappear until well into the next century but as the colony found its feet, as more people emigrated from England and as ships made faster voyages, estrangement from the home situation lessened.

English church life during the 1840s witnessed a growth of music in the services fostered by both Broad and High Church clergy. Though the surpliced choir was gradually adopted by the more prominent parishes, its use was far from standard practice. The push towards universal acceptance was given under the material prosperity and internal stability symbolically announced bu the Great

Exhibition. As Victorian morality shifted in emphasis from the lower classes to the all powerful middle class, the people desired to have the times reflected in greater ornateness. One church historian has labelled this trend in Anglican liturgy in England as the period of "ceremonial development". In the two decades following the mid-century, C.P.S.Clarke cites such things as the surpliced choir, the removal of all unvested persons from the chancel and the sanctuary, preaching in the surplice, chancel screens, the collection of alms in bags and their presentation at the altar, the intoning of services, altar lights (albeit only for illumination), the processing of clergy and choir to and from their seats and the eastward-facing position for communion and creeds as assuming universal recognition.[1] These practices were just as commonly accepted by the more advanced Broad Churches as by the Ritualists. Some had long been in use here in Canterbury. Jacobs claimed he always faced east when celebrating and apart from Lorenzo Moore (Incumbent of Papanui, 1862 - 1875), all clergy now wore surplices. But it is in the sudden adoption of seating robed choirs in the chancel, begun at St. John's in 1865 and mushrooming to other churches in the 'seventies, that indicates the start of a continuous stream of development founded on the English pattern. Socially St. John's congregation longed for brighter services with higher standards of music. Economically they could afford it.

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1. Clarke, C.P.S., The Oxford Movement and After, London, 1932, p.164

Throughout the nineteenth century this church was regarded as the fashionable parish. Despite the pull of St. Michael's in the mid-'seventies and the cathedral shortly afterwards, its patrician character remained long after its influence on other churches was spent. The reason is not hard to find. Before commercial and manufacturing interests converted the city's south eastern part to offices, shops and low class housing, the well-to-do living in this area had ceased trapesing to St. Michael's for the Sunday services. Instead they worshipped first at the Music Hall in Tuam Street, approximately where the Odeon Cinema now stands, moving, when this was converted to a theatre in 1863, to the Freemasons' premises.[2] It was this casual and temporary nature of the venue contrasting sadly with their own social position in the community which incited further moves to build a permanent stone church where services would reflect the cultural aspirations of the parishioners. By May 1864 building could begin: the Church Property Trustees had given land on the corner of Madras and Hereford Streets while the Provincial Council helped financially. Maxwell Bury's plans were turned into stone and mortar with unprecedented smoothness and eighteen months from the laying of the foundation stone a £4,000 church was opened, one capable of seating six hundred. Without the trees and shrubs that today

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2. P., 12.12.1863 Many in the congregation were both prominent Anglicans and high masonry officials - people like J.C.Watts Russell, Grandmaster of the Province, and Dr W. Donald, Deputy Grandmaster. The latter had sat on the earliest Lyttelton vestry meetings with Godley.

have become such an integral part of its picturesque character, its conservative good taste and strong clean lines stood out against the makeshift wooden shops and houses, the whole exuding fashionable ease which to some extent hid the debts that were still outstanding. (Plates 14 and 15.) With two-thirds of the seating appropriated the vestry guaranteed the incumbent's salary through pew rents.[3] More resplendent music was to be part of the image and even before consecration steps were taken to form a competent choir.

The church was near to completion when parishioners held a meeting to elect an organist and choirmaster. Though the ultimate choice would rest with the vestry that body had instructions to appoint a "highly qualified person" who would be "paid accordingly".[4] Though his main duty would be to teach the boys singing,[5] it seems from the start that choristers were envisaged as forming only a nucleus. Certainly it was not long before some men had joined. The following week Waddington was unanimously elected,[6] his formal training at the Royal College and his work at St. Luke's deciding the issue.

Since there was no local church school attached to the parish, boys would be drawn from outside

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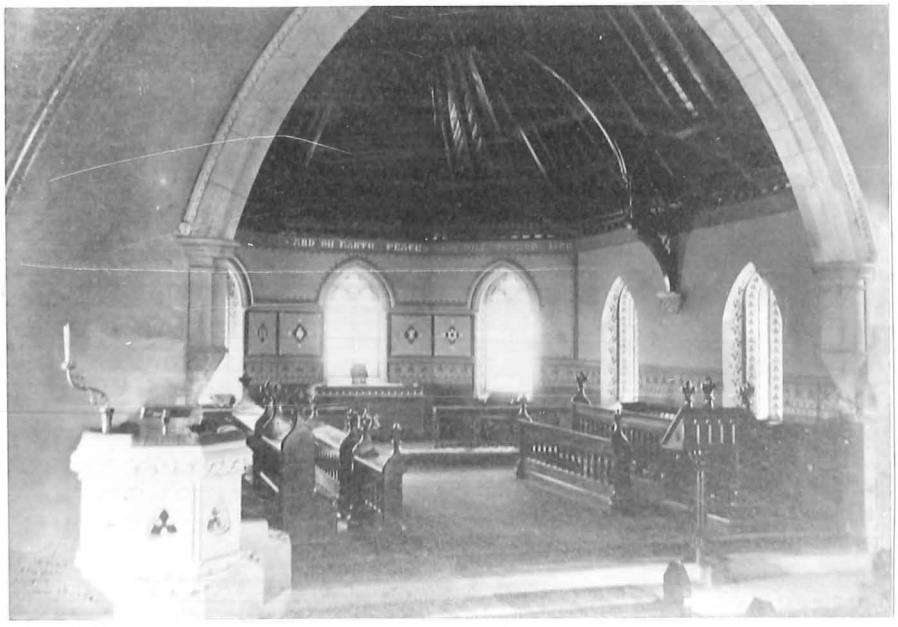
3. Ibid., 28.11.1863 St. John's was the first church to adopt this business procedure.

4. Minutes of St. John's Vestry, 28.11.1865

5. L.T., 12.11.1865

6. Minutes, op.cit., 7.12.1865 Messrs Palairet, Exall, Cain and one other person also applied; the fee was £70 per annum, the highest then offered.

Plates 15 & 16: St. John's, Latimer Square, c. 1870



sources. The presence of women in the choir at this stage was never even broached. Perhaps the vestry hoped that some St. Luke's choristers would come over with their organist. Anyway, for the consecration (27 December, 1865) Waddington evidently decided that a new choir could not be welded together in the short time available and instead enlisted the regular singers from the other city churches. A "powerful (12 stop) harmonium"[7] was placed in the south transept and from this Waddington accompanied and directed the choir in hymns and responses.

For the city it was a grand occasion eclipsing even the cathedral ceremony at St. Michael's twelve months before. As funds became drained this latter project had rapidly turned sour and the people responded in welcome relief to the successful opening of St. John's. The developments at this church were undoubtedly fostered as much by the individual desires of the parishioners as by the granting of de facto cathedral status by the community in general. Therefore fully in keeping with its dual function, members of the Masonic corps in full regalia represented the parochial interests in the packed nave while choir and clergy from surrounding areas processed up the centre aisle to the chancel converting the consecration into diocesan significance.[8]

During the first years various gifts to enhance

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7. ibid., 5.12.1865 8. L.T., 28.12.1865

interior appointments were received. The incumbent gave a set of communion plate; Waddington, with the proceeds from his farewell concert donated gas light brackets.[9] For the choir long surplices after the fashion of the day were given.[10] Buttoned or tied at the neck, they draped down almost covering the boots thus making cassocks unneccessary. Similarly two dozen copies of Mercer's Psalter were presented[11] forming the foundation of a rapidly expanding music library. But the largest, most prestigious item came from England.

The novelty of two manuals and a dozen draw-stops was enough to create more than average interest in the new organ. The subscriptions the Rev. Henry Harper had raised while in England enabled him to approach G.M.Holdich, a London builder with a reputation for quality instruments. Undoubtedly it was the personal tie of old friendship which led Holdich to give the clergyman a course in organ construction to counteract any difficulties he might have in Christchurch.[12] Thanks to this foresight, only a month after the Sir Ralph Abercrombie berthed at Lyttelton, Waddington put the instrument through its paces[13] in a trial run for its formal opening.

The choir - now that church's own - rose to the challenge and the ensuing reports in the local papers provide one of the few glimpses of the

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9. Waddington decided to return to England. The concert took place in the Town Hall, the highlight being a piano arrangement of Haydn's 7th, Symphony for eight hands. ibid., 10.5.1869

10. ibid., 15.9.1866

11. P., 26.10.1866

12. L.T., 12.7.1913

13. ibid., 9.10.1866

music in Waddington's time. The opening voluntary was "Prelude in D" by Rink, John Weldon's anthem "We praise God in the Heavens" sung immediately after. Canticles and hymns were "as usual" and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" provided a fitting climax. As for the performances, the Press commended the singers for their "efficiency" and glowingly avowed their singing was "as good as could be found in some cathedral towns at home."[14] A few small defects were picked up by the Lyttelton Times with a cheerful rejoinder that these would disappear with a "bit of practice".[15] More important is its very mention. Only the social aspect could have countered the view that reporting services degraded them to a concert level.

The growth of the choir's reputation was at one with the growth of the parish itself - "many of the most influential residents" were now regularly attending. Some families came from the foot of Cash ere: Lady Cracroft Wilson - whose daughter later went into the choir - was an "ardent supporter and used to arrive in a carriage and pair with driver and footman in full livery each Sunday morning for the eleven o'clock service."[16] At this time only the morning service was choral. Under this social impetus the role of music grew till in 1867 the pattern was substantially that which characterised the Anglican liturgical offices of matins for the next eighty years. Services

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14. P., 26.10.1866 15. L.T., 26.10.1866

16. Letter from F.N.Hobbs to Rev. D.D.Thorpe, 15.5.1956 at St. John's. Hobbs was one of the earliest choristers and his father, Frederick Hobbs, Mayor of Christchurch,1875-1876, was lead bass singer.

began and ended with choir and clergy in formal procession, prayers were intoned including the congregational "General Thanksgiving", canticles and psalms were sung to Anglican chants while everyone joined in the final choral "Amen". Indicative of the still controversial role of church music, the Communion service remained read. Extreme Protestants still feared the intrusion of secularism if choir and organ became too powerful. Therefore on the one Sunday in the month when choral matins preceded the celebration a pause after the prayer for the church militant allowed the organ to be closed down and the choir to leave their chancel stalls for the seats in the nave.[17] It appears that hymns were the only music at evensong.

St. John's choir was now fully integrated into the social life of the parish. St. Michael's Church Institute had stagnated and to take its place Hoare organised a less didactic, though still cultural series of Winter Entertainments from 1867 in his own parish. At these, poetry readings and short talks would intersperse songs and glees performed by the choir, while waddington could be counted on to persuade various guest artists to come along. Other parishes copied but their efforts never generated the allure of those at St. John's, announced by such titles as "An Evening with Tennyson", "An Evening with Longfellow.".

Typical of the fare was the programme arranged for the opening of St. John's school late in 1867. Under the baton of McCardell, then enjoying a brief

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17. L.T., 9.5.1871

tenure of choirmaster in conjunction with Waddington, a number of choruses were sung, the more experienced members presenting solos.

Miss Cracroft — "The Merry Zingara"
"Per Pieta" from Robert le Diable (Meyerbeer)
(She has a "beautiful voice", said the critic, "which has evidently been highly cultivated.")
Mr Henry and
Mr Thompson — "The Message"
Mr Thomas Lee — "The Village Blacksmith"
("...in his usual excellent style.")
Messrs McCardell, Rutland, Lee and Thompson, "Sleep gentle lady"[18]

But in relating the birth of the St. John's choir we must not lose sight of the incumbent's work. The Rev. J.O'B.Hoare, strongly influenced by the new liberal theology while at Cambridge and strengthened in its ideas during his stay in India,[19] can easily be placed in the Broad Church situation to which most of his congregation belonged. His strong lively personality and gift of restrained public speacking attracted many to the church. As with his sermons, he saw church music as much a medium for edification as for enjoyment. Anything Waddington could do to foster brighter, more musical services, Hoare backed to the hilt, declaring to a packed church that "music in God's house should be the best that could be heard anywhere."[20]

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18. ibid., 15.11.1867

19. During the 1890s Hoare founded the "Our Father's Church", a mixture of Indian syncretism and sociology.

20. ibid., 9.5.1871

This statement clearly unites him with Hook, Jebb and Wesley at Leeds, where, as we saw, reverence and dignity were approached through the music of the cathedral service. Not surprisingly then, there is a complete lack of Gregorianism at least as far as the records show. Instead the official ordering of Hymns Ancient and Modern with Appendix[21] cemented that church's progressive tendencies.[22]

The style of musical composition favoured by this book helps to place the activities at St. John's within a more general framework. John Curwen catagorised the hymn tunes of his day into three main historical divisions.[23] The first are "old tunes" harmonised chiefly in root position, their ruggedness giving an "awe-inspiring quality". Such are well represented in the New Zealand Hymnal and the first edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern. With time this initial strength becomes dissipated though the charm is not necessarily lost. In this second catagory the tunes tend to the more sweet and flowing, largely through adoption of step-wise melodic movement and some auxiliary passing notes. In style such tunes as "Rockingham" and "Melcombe" take after the English glee and "give pleasure in their tunefulness." Many found their way into the 1868 edition of Hymns Ancient

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21. Minutes, op.cit., 16.1.1868

22. Hoare's in erest in music also had its practical side. His library contained Rimbault and Hopkins' comprehensive treatise on the organ (1855) which hints that he may have helped Harper to assemble the Holdich instrument. In 1871 on his departure he gave the book to Waddington's successor, Robert Parker.

23. Curwen, John Spencer, Studies in Worship Music, (1st series), 3rd Edition, London, n.d. [c.1901], p.257

and Modern and were the standard tunes in Christchurch well into the mid-'seventies when Curwen's third catagory appears. These tunes, associated with the compositions of Barnby, Stainer, Sullivan and others, epitomise the tiredness of the fin de siecle period. The melody, once so strong and vital, has been completely swamped. Through an over use of chromaticisms in an attempt at emotional religiosity, a sentimental and mechanical product has emerged.

It was the middle period which St. John's under Hoare and Waddington was experiencing. Under their new organist this style of music would develop not only at the church in Latimer Square but throughout Christchurch. The musical efforts at St. John's, despite a systematic and promising start, was still only in childhood. Under their next organist, Robert Parker, their full capabilities would be realised.

PART II

1

Parker at St. John's
1869 - 1872

The Caroline Coventry sailed into Lyttelton on the 8 June, 1869, bringing Robert Parker and his younger brother John from London in search of a new future.[1] The move was a turning point in the older boy's life. Not only had he been dogged by ill health, a condition that New Zealand's warmer climate would do much to alleviate, but it is doubtful whether he could have made any headway in England. His merits lay not in forming striking new theories but rather in selecting ideas from others and vigorously putting them into action. In a country where organists were fast becoming a glut on the market, lack of physical stamina could only relegate him to obscurity.

Musically he was a conservative. Even in the 1930s he still remained bound to the aesthetic ideals of his Victorian boyhood though there was nothing unusual in this. It was a philosophy based on a one-sided relationship between art and the common held ethical standards of the majority. At its worst, artistic values were rigorously subjected to the criterion of respectability based

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1. Apart from singing comic songs at various entertainments soon after he came to Christchurch, John appears little in musical life. By 1880 he was back in England engaged as surveyor and inspector to a Sanitory Authority in Nottingham.

on the values of the self-made man: thrift sprinkled with humanitarianism. A sophisticated presentation of these aesthetics appeared in H.R.Haweis' once popular book Music and Morals, a volume well known to Parker, and it is from this source he found the clearest expression of his musical ideals.

> 'Both /poetry and music/ reach their highest excellence when they are characterised by lofty thought, graceful rhythm and melodious diction; the thought which edifies, the rhythm which appeals to our love of regularity and the melody which gives emotional pleasure.'[2]

Here Parker allies himself closely with such church and cantata composers as Stainer and Barnby. If he later dropped them as their music was found tired and unconvincing, his love for Mendelssohn and Bach increased as a reaction to the modernist and amoral aesthetics of the new century.

But in New Zealand it was his strong personality which came to the fore. Though in the Christchurch of 1869 music was becoming increasingly important, overall it still lacked direction. Despite the ambitions of a few connoisseurs, for instance those who gathered round Alexander Lean to form the Orchestral Society,[3] the small musical groups were imbued with a homespun quality. The lack of vitality which resulted precluded not only future development as a whole but their own very precarious existance. Nevertheless recognition of the need

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2. A.T.L., 211/16, Notes from a public lecture given in Wellington, c.1930

3. q.v. Gardner, W.J.(Ed.), History of Canterbury, II, Christchurch, 1971, pp.446-447

for music began during the late 'sixties and one must not let the copious publicity accorded the activity of the following decade hide the fact. Parker's importance to the Christchurch musical scene lies not so much in what he instigated but in what he led. His drive and enthusiasm, combined with restoration of health, gave leadership, encouragement and confidence at a time when optimistic social and psychological conditions prevailed.

All generalisations ultimately break down and this one is no exception. How far can the introduction of Mendelssohn's oratorios and the Bach Matthew Passion be attributed to Parker as distinct from the social milieu accepting them as English developments spread? If he had arrived ten years earlier when the settlement was comparatively primitive, human and material resources limited and a depression in gloomy sway, would half the things he accomplished have been done? The same can be said of the 'eighties. The economic cycle by then had turned full circle: money was tight, in church music the cathedral dominated while parishes, previously an arena for so much individual vitality, were emulating the centre to the extent funds allowed. The conjectures must remain. However no man is an island and tremendous though Parker's own gifts were, his success was undoubtedly boosted by the stimulating yet sympathetic environment which he found.

From his earliest days two dominent interests absorbed his life: music and Anglicanism, and where the two were fused, as in the choral service, no pains were spared to make of it the best he

could. His religious sympathies lay wholeheartedly with the Tractarians for, born in 1847 he grew up in the invigorating and controversial atmosphere of one of London's ritualistic churches. He himself characterised his boyhood as spent in that "perfectly electric period - the late '50s and '60s - when the English church was literally quivering with the new life and wonderful awakening that came as a striking result of the /Oxford Movement/.[4]

To be involved in the worship of St George's-in-the-East was certainly exhilerating, and it is no surprise that Parker's own recollections of the period date from 1859, a year of bitter anti-ritualist riots. Already the ultra-protestants had marked it as a dangerous place for under the ministry of Bryan King and Charles Lowder 'popery' was indulged in to the extent of two lighted candles on the altar and the wearing of vestments at the Eucharist. Volatile passions were bound to flare when the acquiescent Blomfield, then in his last years as Bishop of London, appointed a known protestant as curate. King, in a rash attempt one Sunday to bar his junior from preaching, incited the mob who had come along ready prepared. The ensuing weeks saw no peace as faction openly opposed faction during the services. The police, though present in large numbers, hesitated to act where their authority was uncertain. Parker witnessed this. At the impressionable age of twelve he was at the battle's centre for the

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4. Parker, R., speech: The Practical Effects of the Oxford Movement, n.d., A.T.L. 211/21

choristers had to barricade themselves in the chancel and shout to be heard above the din.[5]

Until then the ritualists' attitude had been one of quiet perseverence but with more strident developments, opinions hardened. Parker was one among many who now openly supported their priests; King and Lowder became to him "real heroes". He joined the English Church Union, an organisation established in 1860 to promote the ideas of the ritualists and answer accusations levelled at them by the Church Association founded four years before. Undoubtedly from these experiences stems his love of discipline and ceremonial, and an unrealised desire to enter the priesthood. Above all it was a starting point of "a great mission"[6] to spread and improve the choral service.

This interest led him to embark late in 1868 on a hymnal called Songs of the Sanctuary, a title not wholly devoid of Tractarian overtones.[7] Such an attempt can only have been half serious, engaged in more to satisfy a certain dilattante interest than with any serious entertainment of publication. However his labours produced one positive result, since a wealth of hymns and tunes, not to mention personal contacts, became known to him.

Letters still extant[8] show that he tapped not only conventional sources of Victorian hymnology

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5. Barrett, Philip, "The Tractarians and Church Music", in Musical Times, April, 1972,

6. His own words. L.T., 9.5.1871

7. J.M.Neale's Hymns of the Eastern Church contributed to his collection.

8. A.T.L., 211/33

- people such as Richard Robert Chope, Sabine Baring Gould, J.B.Dykes and Edward Rimbault - but also lesser known authors and composers. A few had mixed feelings. Dykes was not alone in telling him that yet another hymn book was "pointless" especially with the rapid national adoption of Hymns Ancient and Modern. Arthur Cotton, a personal friend, candidly thought some wallowed in the sentimental, a charge which can be levelled at most of those writers who took Haweis' theories lying down.

Emigration however put paid to any further developments along this line though it continued to occupy his spare moments such as they were. By 1870 two hymn tunes of his were regularly sung at St. John's, one being specially printed to raise funds for the new St. Michael's.[9]

On the whole his attempts to establish permanent professional roots in England were unpromising. Health and interests continually jarred, the latter dictating he stay in London, the former pushing him out to remoter country districts to recuperate. While still in his teens he won an organ scholarship to Queen's College, Cambridge[10] but failed to complete the first year. Later he half-heartedly tried polishing up his Latin and Greek for matriculation. Academically nothing came of it though its continued fascination enabled him to teach the subject at Christ's College. Old interests again ascended. He immersed himself in church life, from February

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9. L.T., 10.11.1870

10. Atkinson, K., Robert Parker, A Centenary Tribute, unpublished Ms. in A.T.L., 1947, p.1

1865 playing the harmonium at S. Gabriel's[11] - a Tractarian outpost in London. Undoubtedly it was a direct influence of Lowder's self-sacrificing work among the poor.

Two further experiences had an explicit bearing on his work in New Zealand. Through the advocacy of his organ teacher Scotson Clarke, he landed a combined church and college post at Probus in Cornwall early in 1866. The situation bore striking resemblance to conditions later met at Christchurch. Here he showed the same initiative and adaptability in mediocre circumstances that paved the way for future success. Neither materials nor prospect were lacking, the only credential needed was an outward going and enthusiastic musician to show some enterprise and results would be forthcoming. The pay was not lavish by prevailing standards but he enjoyed teaching English and singing, and the warm Cornish countryside enticed him. Above all he could still be in contact with church music.

Musically the place was run down. The local choral society had long been defunct; its once "considerable" library of manuscripts and printed music, neatly cased and stored at the school, virtually lay forgotten. The school had little more to offer. Though each boy had his obligatory copy of Hymns Ancient and Modern, the chant books were torn beyond repair and the pupils, in the estimation of the headmaster, were "backward and show little taste or talent." They looked on music

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11. Letters from W.Baird to R.Parker, 9.2.1865, 17.8.1865, A.T.L., 211/35

as a "bore". On the other hand, both headmaster and the local clergyman were willing to spend money if the daily choral sevice, which hitherto the boys had provided, could be improved.[12]

How successful was he? Despite no direct evidence there are pointers. He kept the letters of this period till his death in 1937; he rejuvenated the Probus Choral Society[13] and when he left, Scotson Clarke thought the incumbent would give him a reference to one of the Oxford Colleges, all of which seems to indicate a generally happy and successful time in the south of England. Finally there is his New Zealand record. With his emigration barely twelve months away it is hard to reconcile the teacher in Canterbury with a failure in Cornwall. What is certain however is that by 1868 he had left to help Scotson Clarke at the London Organ School. From the same date probably stems his appointment as sub-organist to W.H.Monk.

This was a period of gentle consolidation of his own viewpoint on church music rather than any radical new developments. The main difference at S. Matthias', Stoke-Newington - "the cathedral of the Anglo-catholic party" he termed it - lay in the whole-heartedness with which choir and congregation worked together in the interests of the church service.

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12. letter from R. Blackmore to R. Parker, 28.2.1866, A.T.L., 211/35

13. A concert programme of 17 May, 1867 shows him conducting Beethoven and Mendelssohn choruses amongst other ephemeral works. Atkinson, op.cit., p.2

To facilitate this Monk adopted a "masculine and broad style": unfamiliar music was rarely heard, tempi were judged partly by occasion, partly by size of congregation and all singing was in unison with the exception of hymns and the rare anthem. His own aesthetic ideas conformed to this pragmatic approach for although Monk enjoyed the then fashionable school of composition with Spohr at its head, for the sake of hearty and none-too-subtle congregational singing, "where simplicity, breadth and strength are the obvious requirements", he preferred diatonic harmony.[14]

In his dealings with the choir, Monk stressed discipline and reverence. Far from this tight control decreasing numbers he found that even on a voluntary basis the all male choir was large enough to supply not only the compulsory Sunday services but the daily choral evensongs on a roster basis and a Friday night practice. Small wonder then that Parker should carry away the fruits of his experience at S. Matthias, the fame of which had spread throughout London, to his own choirs in New Zealand.

It was while at Stoke Newington that St. John's, Latimer Square came into his life. Hoare, receiving notice of Waddington's intended resignation and finding no one in Christchurch likely to further the progress already made, contacted his friend, C.B.Dalton, then rector of Highgate, and asked him to find a suitably qualified choirmaster. Dalton turned to Monk in the neighbouring parish who immediately recognised a golden opportunity for

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14. Curwen, op.cit., p.198

his none-too-robust assistant. Parker again attracted by the better climate and the prospect of success that the colonies generally offered, accepted. Within four months he was on the high seas, energetically organising singing and other entertainments for both sailors and passengers.[15]

On arrival Parker immediately launched himself into musical activities. Concerts, either at church gatherings or with various societies, were arranged where he sang and played. Indicative of his impact on ordinary public life was his lecture on general aspects of music, printed in full by both papers. McCardell in 1856 and J.B.Stansell in 1861 had given similar talks, but where they concurred with popular opinion, Parker spoke out with assured authority. He forthrightly attacked that symbol of domestic culture, the piano, as being in most cases "a sort of drawing room gymnasium apparatus, for exercising young ladies' fingers and developing rapidity of motion." The cult of the solo song fared little better. Both he saw, were a product of middle class mass-produced aesthetic standards. The passage provides a first hand glimpse of the twenty-two year old organist.

> This development /of the solo song/ has been too rapid and cannot be called by a musician an improvement, and for this reason: so much rubbish has been written and so many people come forward as solo singers that it is absolutely painful to listen to either. The worst of this too rapid development however is, that really fine compositions are often murdered by

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15. Letter from Samuel Gradgrind to R. Parker, n.d., A.T.L., 211/34

> persons who have neither voice, nor what is far better still, the power of singing with expression, to justify them in coming before a public audience.[16]

On the other hand the rise of the part-song as an exercise in singing and listening gave invaluable benefit, a result evidenced no more than in the church.

> Anyone who has been absent from England and who remembers what village singing was like a few years since would be astonished now at the vast improvement it shows. Many a village choir is now superior to what some cathedral choirs were singing during the Georgean period. I only mention this in passing as I intend to speak more fully on the same subject on a future occasion.[17]

Almost two years went by before the opportunity came; time to familiarize himself with the limits and strengths of the local people and their resources, time also for the modification of his ideals. Much as he delighted in and desired to see the corporateness of Stoke Newington worship established in Christchurch he could not blind himself to the fact that none of the local churches aspired to it. Shortly after assuming office at St. John's, Parker instituted week night congregational practices but so few turned up the innovation floundered. In 1871 Hoare returned to England and with another incumbent bringing renewed enthusiasm, Parker decided to attack from another angle. The first of the 1871 Winter

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16. It was this accent on dynamics and expression which distinguished his Mendelssohn Society (1870) from other local groups.

17. L.T., 19.8.1869

Entertainments held in T.M.Gee's schoolroom provided the chance.[18] There Parker spoke of his ideals for the choral service. He gave practical advice, punctuated by examples from the choir, for the improvement of the congregational singing of chants and hymns. A full reprint in the papers showed he had lost none of his forthrightness, humorously but with firmness dealing with elementary matters.

> In the singing of the psalms and hymns, I would ask you to notice particularly the commas, as I make their observance a great point with the choir.
>
> I would also ask for some modifications of tone to suit the ever varying sentiments of the words: now subdued and penitential, now exultant and triumphant. You would be surprised at the wonderful reality which would be given to the service /if this was done/.
>
> I would ask you not to drag the tune of the hymns especially at the end of the verses. If you will listen to the tune as I play it on the organ, and then sing it throughout in that time, making only a slight rallentando at the end of the hymn, and introducing no notes but what are played by me, and always remembering the commas and gradations of loud and soft, a great improvement will be effected at once.

Meanwhile he was already planning a series of articles to give fundamental information on the organisation and management of choirs. These would have wider appeal since the diocesan magazine was publishing them. It is this 1871 group of documents that not only reveals his

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18. ibid., 9.5.1871 In addition to the choir's items, instrumental selections from Don Giovanni were also played. R.Parker (piano), Gwalter Palairet (violin), J.C.Wilson (flute) and Mr. Cooke ('cello).

attitude to the choral service but also marks a turning point in the various fortunes of choirs and choirmasters.

To Parker music was an integral part of the service. Only by its use could the whole worshipping body be joined with one voice. The artificial medium promoted a universality not gained from multitudinous speech rhythms and inflexions. By means of monotoning the public prayers and singing psalms and canticles to simple melodies (Monk's practice), the unintelligible mumble hitherto characterising the services would be replaced by audible and intelligent communication between clergy and laity. To strengthen his argument in the eyes of the protestant sceptics he appealed to the new interest in Biblical history.

> The services maintained in the Temple at Jerusalem were, as far as the music is concerned, almost identical in style with those of the Church at this day.... The psalm chanted by the children of Israel on the eastern shore of the Red Sea might be sung now, as it was then, without a Churchman noticing any important difference between it and the services to which he is accustomed. It was (1) liturgical, (2) choral, (3) antiphonally chanted and (4) instrumentally accompanied.[19]

Now turning to the choir, he grouped their functions into three.

1. To lead the congregation in the singing because worship was essentially a communal act. But this applied only to hymns and proper psalms, those parts of the service which changed according

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19. NZCN, Sept., 1871, p.9

to the church season and which made a special reference to the individual. The music accordingly had to be chosen to suit the needs of even the most unmusical in the congregation otherwise the desired co-operation would dwindle. So for the choirmasters who chose the settings, Parker laid down rigid rules governing the range of melody and the degree of complexity of the chant. To the organist, he directed the harmonies be no more complex than the main tune and that care should be taken to avoid any discords in the reciting notes.[20] This last qualification was an attack on "the other sort of choir - we will not label it - which prefers music sufficiently complex to prevent the congregation from interrupting."

He endorsed the use Gregorians. They fulfilled the criteria for corporate music as well as giving greater expression to the words. He had seen these performed at S. Matthias' where the congregation knew the "tones by heart and sang them with fervour...." For a short time at Stoke Newington, the hymns too had come under their dominion but the people soon reverted to the more traditional tunes as it was generally felt that "medievalism could be pushed too far."[21]

What was Parker's conception of Gregorians? Certainly their melodic lines flowed more gracefully than the rather heavy, four square "Veni Creator" of 1866 (see above, p.70), but they were still a far cry from plain chant as known to the twentieth century. His service, written in 1876

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20. ibid., August, 1872, p.148

21. A.T.L., 211/21 The hymnal referred to was probably Thomas Helmore's Hymnal Noted, 1851 and 1854

for use at St. Michael's,[22] provides an illustration. There are still traces of the Anglican chant and the whole was accompanied on the organ. But the opening reveals its inspiration and the format generally parallels the Tallis and Gibbons services which were becoming familiar at that time: lines of unison chanting interspersed with full harmony.

As Parker usually advocated the singing of the canticles by the choir alone (see below), it is striking that the sole mention of Gregorians at St. John's occurs in a reference to the Benedictus. At this particular service the three psalms sung afterwards were taken to Anglican chants.[23] Evidently the Broad Church element was not to be ousted by their young and "advanced" organist.

2. If the choir had a duty to lead the people, its other function was to beautify the worship.

> The fixed portions of the service, such as the "Te Deum" and minor canticles, should be sung to the best music which the choir is capable of rendering, as the highest acknowledgement we can make to God for this good gift of music. Just in the same way we try to make our churches architecturally beautiful... that they may stand as a thank offering to Him who has endowed us with the power of creating forms and sounds of beauty.[24]

Here Parker showed some compromise; S.S.Wesley would have agreed with everything. From mere familiarity Parker assumed the congregation would

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22. See Appendix D
23. P., 6.2.1871
24. L.T., 13.5.1871

follow the words while the choir, under solid training and practice could increase the spiritual meaning through the interpretation of the music. Thus the usual morning choral service at St. John's (the evening ones still being spoken) was sung to settings by Goss, Wesley, Hopkins, Mendelssohn Elvey and Monk. The Tallis festival responses were standard procedure.

Governed by this idea of presenting the best music available, it was logical that choral settings be extended to the Communion office. Again, St. John's under Parker led the way. By 1871 it was arranged that on the first Sunday in every month, choral Communion would be held in the morning, the other evening celebration keeping to established practice.[25]

3. The final function of the choir was to link clergy and laity. It symbolically fused their previous roles. By processing in and out of the vestry, sitting in the chancel and wearing cassock and surplice the choir became identified with the clergy. All this strengthened the sacramental nature of the chancel and the office of the ordained. On the other hand, the choir could not take those parts relegated by the Prayer Book to the priest and thus were joined to the laity. A hearty response from one body to the other was thereby assured. For example, when the choir sang the anthem, the chancel was emphasised - Barnby had already associated this part with the priest by calling it a "musical sermon" -

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25. ibid., 9.5.1871

prestige in community circles. Starting with Waddington at St. Luke's and gradually moving out via the other city churches to the more important suburban ones like Merivale and Avonside, a man was chosen not solely for his interest in the job, still less because he happened to be the local schoolmaster, but for his qualifications, first in music generally and then in practical experience within the church situation. This change of emphasis achieves greater relief when one realises the organists' past history. Bilton had been engaged by the Association as an organist it is true, but his principal work was to teach. His departure in 1867 ends this era. Waddington was chosen as an organist at St. Luke's and Parker became the first musician to be engaged from England in that capacity. Whether he taught privately, in a school or not at all was completely up to him. Later Henry Wells (St. Michael's 1880) and J.C.Bradshaw (Cathedral, 1901) were brought out on the same terms.

Again Parker's growing prestige symbolized the rising status of St. John's. In the absence of any cathedral and the tradition at St. Michael's being so weak, that church had assumed diocesan leadership. In 1870 the Synod service was held there. Led by a "very full choir", the whole service was sung, E.A.Lingard, the incumbent at St. Luke's monotoning the prayers.[27] But even on an ordinary Sunday the stone church would be packed and extra seats placed down the aisle were needed to cope with the ever-increasing influx of

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27. L.T., 8.9.1870

visitors.

The vicar attributed the popularity to the quality of music. At the annual parish meeting he commented: "a better service than that performed at Easter had not been performed anywhere."[28]

The whole season indeed was typical of Parker's attempt to make worship meaningful through the music. Simple unaccompanied daily choral services were rendered during Holy Week. On Good Friday the choir sang hymns and an anthem ("My God look upon me") while psalms and canticles were monotoned. Finally on Easter Day the services culminated when the organ blazed forth to accompany full choral services both morning and evening. The music chosen reflected Parker's recent English background.

Morning: Easter Hymn to Monk's tune
Te Deum: J.B.Dykes (cathedral through setting)
Anthem: Elvey, "Christ being raised from the dead."
Communion: fully choral, Sanctus by Mendelssohn.

Evening: Canticles, Wesley's chant service in F
Anthem: W.H.Monk, "Now upon the first day of the week"
Tallis' festival responses were used throughout the day while Parker's setting of the offertory sentences had their first performance.[29]

But others praised the personal magnetism of

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28. ibid., 18.4.1871 29. NZCN, May, 1871, p.2

their incumbent, the Rev. Ebenezer Bailey. By January, 1872, after being there only one year, he could boast a congregation so expanded that seating was inadequate and church revenue, with increased communicants, doubled. He was equally popular with the children. Afternoon services he designed specially for them swelled the Sunday School from thirty to 230 pupils, the staff growing to twenty-five.[30] And the choir was not forgotten. Bailey attracted younger singers augmenting it to a miniature choral society. With a membership numbering over forty in 1872 and equally balanced between men and boys,[31] they were called on at many parish functions. For them though, the highlight was naturally the annual picnic. Taking advantage of the mid-week half holiday when all shops and offices closed, the choir, accompanied by friends and wives, went off in horse and carts to the Sumner beach.

But development was not left entirely to the uncertainties of a personality cult. A music library was formed in 1871 to stimulate what already promised to be a very healthy future. The incumbent supported it. Towards its funds Bailey offered the proceeds of his public lecture on Bernard Palissy. When the night came the Music Hall was crammed, people even stood round the walls to hear a lively entertaining speaker as well as the interludes provided by the choir.[32] This was the successful side of Bailey's ministry at St. John's; unfortunately there was another. Controversy

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30. L.T., 25.1.1872 31. ibid., 24.2.1872
32. ibid., 10.10.1872; 13.10.1872

Plate 17: Choir of St. John's, Latimer Square,

In gratitude for Bailey's support, the choir presented him with a group portrait taken outside the south transept where the organ chamber now stands. (P., 17.8.1872) A photograph, reproduced and so labelled in the Centenial History (Plate 17) in not completely convincing. Though technically poorly delineated, the figure on the left and standing apart from the other men, bears striking resemblance to H. C. M. Watson, the next incumbent. But true or otherwise, from the composition of the choir, the photograph would seem to date between 1872 and 1874. Of more importance, however, is the visual impact of this large, all male, surpliced choir, well able to fill all stalls and proud of their position in church and community.

Selwyn Bruce in his reminiscences, The Early Days of Canterbury (Christchurch, 1932, p.141), mentions some choir members from this period:

Basses: James Knox, James and William Anthony, Frederick Hobbs, T. M. Gee and George Cliff; Tenore: Melchior Winter, Rochfort Snow, Alfred Evans, Charles Morris, -. Stephens, -. Jacobs, -. Waters; Altos: -. Mackintosh, -. Smith; Trebles: Michael Fisher, Frederick Lake, Frederick Pollock, "Holly" Bruce, Jack Costley, Harry Bruce, Arthur "Madam" Ward, George Pengelly, J. H. Fisher.

stemming from deeper causes than petty jealousy marked his Christchurch career.

Halfway through his Palissy lecture a bout of neuralgia forced a postponement. It revealed a desease which lay at the root of an unstable and volatile personality, one liable to crack under duress. Though he could always maintain a large band of loyal supporters even during his worst periods, those concerned with administrative matters continually found fault with Bailey's unpredictable nature. Beginning with a dispute over a projected performance of Elijah in the church, it ended in bitter acrimony not only over his personal and professional background but also over his handling of the parish finances. As may be judged from an incomplete entry in a contemporary Crockford's the truth is now impossible to uncover.

The point was made before that Parker inherited advantageous circumstances denied other churches; we have now seen that with Bailey, the luck continued and that the clergyman's oratory and personality, tinged with a touch of flamboyance, helped Parker to have his first local taste of success. These external influences must not be minimised, yet neither must Parker's own contribution for he seized the opportunity to assert his leadership. As we shall see, choir development during the 'seventies was largely dependent on his driving force.

2

The Seventies

Prelude

St. John's provided an example of what could be achieved musically within a colonial situation. The ingredients were an enthusiastic (perhaps even controversial) incumbent, an energetic choirmaster fully alive to his responsibilities yet with an awareness of the possible which could be realised only through courage and stamina, the whole bonded together by the parishes good-will and co-operation in these matters. Dissension, rife in other fields, appears never to have spread to St. John's choral service.

Parker's influence went far beyond this church for his tenure there coincided with Vogel's expansionist policies felt increasingly in Canterbury from 1870 onwards. Development of roads and railways as part of the central government's public works policy, brought together communities especially in country districts, on a wider scale fostered a sense of national identity and at the same time stepped up immigration. Between 1870 and 1876 the number of new arrivals exceeded the total of the previous fifteen years and even in 1878 over half of Canterbury's population was English born - a percentage higher than in any other New Zealand province. Despite distance and high land prices they came because Canterbury had acquired a reputation for social and economic stability (no Maori wars), a constant demand for work and an aristocratic spirit rare among colonies.

The optimistic encouragement to "think big" undoubtedly aided the growth of the town itself, and the desire to impose more English culture on the rawness still very much in evidence, is reflected in the adoption of a more sophisticated attitude to worship and the growth of church choirs. By 1871 communities like Sydenham,[1] Heathcote and Merivale had these in embryonic form, comprised usually of adults who though interested, lacked any real sense of direction. The means whereby the end could be accomplished was missing. The consecration of St. Mary's, Addington, a church set in one of the poorest areas, provides a glimpse of the mild chaos which often accompanied these early attempts.

> A few minutes after eleven o'clock a procession was formed headed by a dozen boys; they certainly presented a motley appearance, clothes of all colours and shapes, white flannel caps, straw hats, and billy cocks. It would very much have added to the solemnity of the service if surplices had been provided for the choir. And then, the clergy, one naturally asks why they cannot adopt some uniform style of dress - short surplices to the knees, and long surplices trailing to the ground, surplices with a multitude of plaits, and surplices plain on the shoulders, correct-looking cassocks, and grey trousers and muddy boots, two college caps, a biretta, a bell-topper and felt hats of many shapes. The High, Low and Broad Church seem to have each their distinctive style of dress, but if all things were decently and in order such incongruities would not be seen.[2]

The failure of the suburbs came through their

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1. R.T.Searell was training boys from the local school to sing at services. L.T., 6.11.1871

2. NZCN, Nov., 1870, p.13

inability to channel their aspirations into a workable form. At St. Michael's the lack of discipline which permeated similar attempts to achieve a standard worthy of a pro-cathedral was caused through a lethargy which accumulated over years of frustrated effort. In 1867 only the tattered remnants of the "new era" remained. The choral classes and those adults who sang with the choir had vanished leaving only a dozen small boys - there can hardly have been more - unsurpliced and seated at the west end. In one respect only was the situation healthier: the authorities had grown more realistic. For their services to achieve parity with St. John's they knew much hard work would be required together with proper financial backing maintained at a more stable level than the fluctuating free will offerings hitherto relied upon had provided. But a depression throughout 1867 to 1869 inspired no one to spend money on luxuries and the authorities, instead of establishing disciplinary links between classroom and church desk, concentrated on superficial matters. Bilton's single command was therefore experimentally divided in the hope that two people sharing responsibility would succeed where one failed, but the employment of outsiders served only to make the problem more intractable. Henry Packer, a man of undoubted talent as an administrator and practising musician,[3] gave his gratuitous services as organist but his position carried little weight. The real say in affairs went to

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3. 1858 Hon. Sec. Christchurch Harmonic Society; 1869 conducted with great success amateur performances of The Creation and Messiah; later, from 1871 he played the French horn in Lean's Orchestral Society concerts.

the choirmaster and for this Miss Edith Deardon was charged with the "reconstruction and management" of the choir,[4] an unusual move and not a wise one. The only recorded effect she had (and that was abortive) was in persuading Jacobs to institute half-yearly book prizes as incentives[5] - surely a costly means of bringing forth uncertain results. With her marriage to Henry Matson of Papanui in June, less than seven weeks later, the tenure was probably brief. More suitable was their second choice of Arthur Appleby who arrived from England in 1867. When exactly he became choirmaster is not certain but a report of 1870 indicates he affected some progress.[6] Further details remain hidden.

However as in other spheres of activity it was the turn of the decade which saw a partial regeneration in musical affairs. Indeed the whole parish began to awake as the walls of the new church rose beyond the surrounding roof tops. Thus inspired, fresh hopes came for the choral service and with Packer's resignation accepted,[7] the vestry reverted to the old practice, appointing Arthur Landergan organist and choirmaster. The choice of a professional to train the choir is one distinguishing feature of the 'seventies, a decade in which three stages of music and organisation appear, both within St. Michael's and outside.

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4. L.T., 3.5.1867 5. ibid., 19.6.1867

6. ibid., 18.4.1871 Later Parker praised him for his tenor voice. He became President of the Christchurch Musical Society and a co-founder of the Liedertafel.

7. P., 18.4.1871 His father's business demanded more of his time.

First, the development of new choirs and the transformation of existing ones into elaborate machinery. This concludes around 1873.

Second, the years of maturity and stability, lasting in the city churches till 1877 but maintained in suburbia until the cathedral opens in 1882.

Third, a period of simplification of the pattern and disintegration within the city churches.

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Period 1

Formation 1870 - 1873

> Music being so important to public worship, no apology is necessary for the publication in this journal of a series of articles on the subject. Care will be taken to make them practical; and, with that object, while the very highest and best style of music will be described and recommended, it will not be forgotten that, in many New Zealand churches, this highest and best style, is at present, from various causes, unattainable.[1]

In this way Parker attacked the prevalent sloppiness and disorder giving instead well directed paths towards improvement. Articles on the formation and management of choirs, on congregational singing and on chanting were envisaged and within a year all appeared, but intended debates on anthems and various notations were left unwritten. For country churches such topics would have been too theoretical while the

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1. NZCN., Sept., 1871, p.9

more important suburban ones, because of their central position, quickly developed acceptable skills, making such discussion pointless.

He wrote simply, dealing in minute detail with matters which only ten years later would be considered mundane. Typical of his clarity are the clipped passages on the respective duties of precentor (or choirmaster) and choir, reminiscent indeed of Curwen's writings. Running throughout is a concern for responsibility and obedience.

> The duties of a precentor are to provide copies of all music required; to select the chants and hymn tunes...; to place the members of the choir (often a task requiring much tact); to direct the practice meetings of the choir and congregation; to lead the responses, whether sung or said, and the singing generally; to prepare the service lists, one for the prayer desk and one at least for each of the choir desks, and one for the organist (if any).
>
> The duties of the choristers are to attend all services and practice meetings, when not absolutely prevented, giving the precentor as long notice as possible when compelled to be absent. To say and sing the responses, and to take the place and the part allotted by the precentor in the other musical portions of the services.[2]

He therefore catered for a wide variety. At the one extreme a very simple choir; their aim in leading the congregation's spoken parts was stressed. Invariably in these cases no clear distinction could be drawn between choir and congregation and the atmosphere was far removed from the growing city tradition of cathedral

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2. ibid., Oct., 1871, p.9

practice. On the other, the more developed suburban churches, like those at Avonside, St. Luke's and Merivale, were also catered for. Though their buildings were not large enough for chancel stalls their transepts permitted turned in pews at the east end of the nave. Parker made choir seating uniform by placing men along the back rows and the trebles in front, adding that "if any boys can be got to sing second treble, so much the better. They should sit in front of the altos." Through him many first heard the terms "Decani" and "Cantoris".[3]

Parker emphasised that regular weekly training was imperative if the choir was to advance. He favoured Fridays, then not a late business night, because "in case of any mistake or difficulty occurring, there is an opportunity of remedying it at an extra practice on Saturday: while it is not so far from Sunday as to render it likely that lines or instruction will be forgotten."

Music in nearly all these churches, whether urban or country, was scarce. Apart from familiar hymn tunes and standard psalm chants little else was available. To those able to afford new books Parker recommended various compilations familiar to him: Elvey, W.H.Monk and Mercer among psalters; for hymnals, the S.P.C.K. Church Hymns,[4] Hymns Ancient and Modern, Chope, Mercer and the Year of Praise. The New Zealand Hymnal he hardly considered

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3. ibid., Dec., 1871, p.43

4. Edited by John Stainer (1870); used at Heathcote (L.T., 18.4.1874) and briefly at St. John's, Latimer Square (ibid., 31.12.1875).

mentioning.[5] Music for the versicles and responses, the Litany and the "Amen" which ended intoned prayers he notated in solfa, explaining the symbols in a footnote. Thus enough for a complete full choral service was given not to choir members only but to all who read the Church News. His "mission" was in earnest and though it offered no easy path many choirs adopted his guidence with the result that within three years even Lorenzo Moore, still writing diatribes against the immorality of opera, admitted music into his services at Papanui.

Adoption of the choral service in country areas was generally more spontaneous showing a degree of informality which takes one back to the Godley period. To the south activity naturally developed where the railway lines penetrated - an area taking in Prebbleton, Leeston, Halswell and later Tai Tapu. Riccarton,[6] closest to Christchurch, became leader under the efforts of the Rev. Croasdale Bowen and Mrs Leonard Harper, neither of whom were unaware of city developments. Here on patronal festivals, the choirs of St. Luke's and St. John's would combine with local singers to chant a full choral service. In 1870 the Tallis setting founded on plainchant was sung, with choral responses and hymns[7] extending to the intoning of prayers the following year.[8] By 1873 they could rely wholly on the local community. It cannot be proven but Parker's influence is perhaps seen in

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5. NZCN, Oct., 1871, p.9

6. Now Upper Riccarton. The original St. Peter's was built on the site of the present church in 1857.

7. L.T., 1.7.1870 8. ibid., 4.7.1871

the flowering of the choir group at this period and in the use of Gregorians; the 1873 festival saw a complete realisation of what he had hoped - but failed - to accomplish at St. John's - full congregational participation.

> The afternoon service, entirely choral, was well rendered by an efficient choir, and very heartily joined in by the congregation; in this respect contrasting most favourably with the apathetic way in which the prayers and responses are ordinarily said.[9]

Perhaps Riccarton achieved his congregational ideal because, unlike those city churches, it was under no compulsion to compete for choral status. St. John's and, by 1873 St. Michael's as well, increasingly found that once a viable choir was started, an image for other churches to aspire to, had not only to be kept but also to be exceeded at every opportunity.

Templeton, Prebbleton and Halswell during the Rev. W.A.Paige's incumbency showed a similar development to Riccarton. Parker's advice was again taken and from 1871 Gregorians were invariably used for psalms and canticles. The choirs here though, were ruder affairs and until 1874 when Paige and his wife undertook a children's singing class at Prebbleton[10] it is doubtful whether any formal group existed.

But not every parish desired the Gregorian tunes; often the decision fell on the vicar's personal tastes which in turn were strongly

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9. ibid., 30.6.1873 10. ibid., 14.4.1874

associated with churchmanship. Paige was well known for his ritualistic tendencies and in 1879 would be ousted from Ashburton for daring to put a cross on the altar. St. John's, Leeston was outside his jurisdiction and it opted for the more common Anglican chant. Described in 1873 as "one of the most comfortable places of worship in the province", this Leeston church had a choir of seven men and seven boys seated in the chancel ("the same as at the city churches") and all provided with psalters and hymnbooks. Under the tuition of a Mr Taylor, two hymns in four part harmony were sung by the choir at the consecration.[11]

The uniting of these choirs for special occasions welds this area into a distinct entity, independent of Christchurch. By the early 'ninties it had expanded to include Lincoln and Southbridge with a population large enough to support their own local festivals.

Much further south another enclave appeared. In 1871 the Church News paid tribute to the choir at Geraldine.

> St. Mary's church has hitherto wanted the aid of a harmonium in the musical part of her services, but happily this want is now supplied. The ladies of the place so exerted themselves in the matter that in a short time they collected the sum of £30 and procured one. We have every hope now that the Geraldine choir will soon equal other choirs in the neighbourhood.[12]

A major rival sprang up only ten miles away. In

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11. ibid., 14.1.1873 Mr H. Lee, organist, Rev. J.K.Willmer, vicar.

12. NZCN, June, 1871, p.3

1873 Temuka was performing a choral service fully the equal to many Christchurch suburban churches. Hymns and canticles were sung "as usual" while the psalms were chanted for the first time to Anglicans. Both morning and evening services were choral.[13]

A similar division based on the use of Gregorians appears among parishes north and east of Christchurch. Influenced by such prominent ritualistic parishioners as John Milner, B.W.Mountfort and perhaps the wealthy Palairets', Avonside had swung round to embrace a moderately High position. This power of the parishioners to determine ceremonial attitudes should not be belittled: it was largely through Mountfort that a long ritualistic tradition formed at Philipstown in the 'eighties. With the change at Avonside a greater stress was naturally placed on the sacramental aspect of the Easter festival and in 1872 a three hours service - hymns sermons and prayers on the seven last words from the Cross - was held there for the first time in Australasia.[14] Hymn texts like "Glory be to Jesus" and "At the cross her station keeping" sung to old tunes of German parentage were redolent of the slightly pietistic High Church atmosphere.

But Sunday by Sunday it was John Milner who played the harmonium and rehearsed the choir in the singing of Gregorians. Parker's influence here was probably minimal for though the two men must have often met in Milner's music shop to share their common ideals regarding the choralservice, the latter had formed his own conclusions long

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13. ibid., April, 1873 14. ibid., May,1872, p.106

before 1869. His paper, Gregorian Music,[15] reveals an interest culled from long hours of experience and reading both in England and in Canterbury. From his own store he supplied the church choir with a large library. Mercer's psalter, Hymns Ancient and Modern and anthems were all held but of greater significance from the musical point of view were the Christmas carols which he introduced to Christchurch.

In England the Victorian carol as an expression both religious and musical began with the publication in 1853 of Carols for Christmastide. This slim volume contained twelve seasonal songs compiled from the sixteenth century Finnish Piae Cantiones that had recently come to the notice of Thomas Helmore and John Mason Neale. Thus when "Good King Wenceslas" and "Good Christian men rejoice" appeared for the first time in the English language, they resulted from the antiquarian leanings of two Tractarian clergymen. Certainly Avonside had copies of this book in 1880[16] and may have used them as early as 1872 when the choir introduced those songs,[17] but despite a provincial link with Helmore,[18] the inclusion of "The first Nowell" and "In excelsis gloria" points to another source. This premise is strenthened by the titles

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15. Published by direction of the Cathedral Guild, Christchurch, 1885, pp.1-12

16. P., 27.12.1880

17. "The Lord at first did Adam make", "The first Nowell", "The angel Gabriel", "The angel's song to Joseph", and "In excelsis gloria" were also sung. L.T., 24.12.1872

18. Parker had met him in London playing through some carols on the piano. A.T.L., 211/24

of the carols sung later in the local churches.

In 1871 two Oxford university men, Rev. H.R.Bramley and John Stainer, brought out their Christmas Carols, New and Old, a much larger collection which included thirteen traditional carols, among them the two previously mentioned from Helmore's book, and twenty-four by modern Victorian composers. The Church in England, now won over to Hymns Ancient and Modern, accepted this unhesitatingly, the "new" appealing where the "old" did not. Its rapid appearance at Avonside can only have come through Milner's business connections. The following year St. Michael's and St. John's both presented carols at their Christmas services while St. Luke's choir sang them to the accompaniment of a small harmonium as they journeyed round the parish in traps.[19]

In contrast neither Merivale nor St. Luke's pursued Gregorians. From 1867 to 1872 the former church had been a chapel of ease to Papanui and services there reflected its subordination to the old-fashioned ideas of Moore: Mrs Lane played the harmonium while "friends helped in leading the congregational psalmody."[20] By 1872 the district, nearer the city than Papanui, had expanded into a parish in its own right. As Knowles was appointed first incumbent great changes occurred in the music - moves initiated partly by independence, partly as a sign of growing up. In preparation for a proper choir, the church wardens re-arranged

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19. L.T., 24.12.1873; 25.12.1873
20. St Mary's, Merivale, Church Minutes, 16.5.1867

the transept seats, turning them inwards after Robert Speachley's original design (Plates 18,19), and affixed book boards to them.[21] A parish school was planned promising a future all male choir[22] though some women would still have a subsidiary position. Further, in line with other churches where the new choral impetus was rising, the New Zealand Hymnal was discarded in favour of Hymns Ancient and Modern with Appendix (1868) while chants came from Ouseley and Monk's psalter - the only church where its use is recorded.

Despite Knowles' continual emphasis on the choir's role in leading the singing, which meant that only hymns, psalms and canticles could be presented chorally to the simplest of melodies, under the guidence of J.S.Jameson (organist of St. Luke's, c. 1871) and Mr Simms as choirmaster, a "marked improvement took place in the musical portions of the services."[23] At the 1873 Easter celebrations, Elvey's simple anthem, "Christ is risen from the dead" made for a "more than usually impressive service," though being semi-choral the prayers were not intoned.[24]

Yet in one respect developments at Merivale are the antithesis of those at St. Luke's. At the former the impression is of Knowles holding back developments longed for by the laity; at the

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21. ibid., 13.8.1872

22. As the school opened fresh tune books were bought for the choristers. ibid., 10.9.1872

23. NZCN, Jan., 1873, p.1

24. L.T., 15.4.1873,

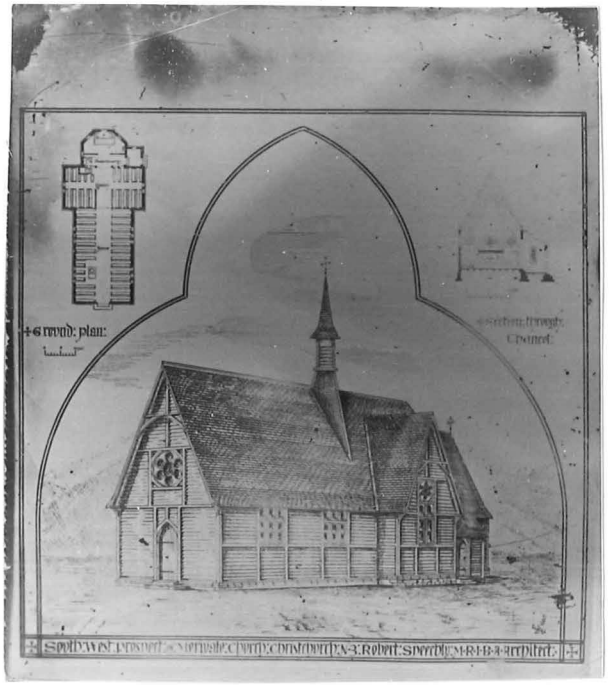
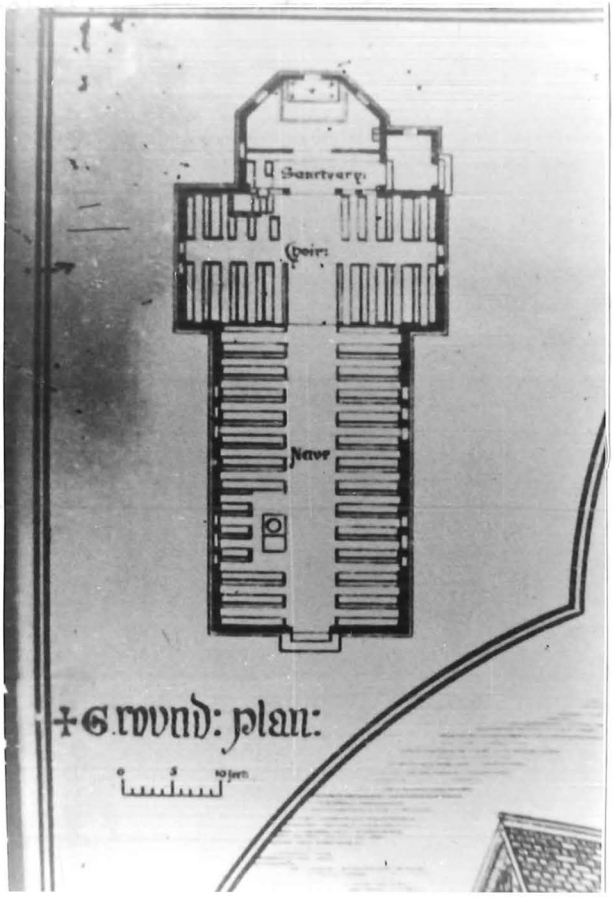


Plate 18: Church of St. Mary's, Merivale.

Plate 19: Detail of above



latter it is the congregation who by and large apply the reins. If various diplomatic statements made by Lingard are seen as attempts to mollify his parishioners, his own stance favoured a full musical service though not one with any elaborate ceremonial. Certainly Lingard possessed a strong bass voice and would sometimes intone services at the higher churches of St. Michael's and Riccarton. - a few of his choir members inevitably following him.[25]

But St. Luke's is also peculiar in character for though standing within the city area it never shared the prominence nor the elaborate music of St. John's or St. Michael's. In atmosphere it remained a suburban church.

The redevelopment of its choir during 1870 to 1872 strongly reveals the influence however, of its richer and more ornate neighbour under Parker - an opinion brought out by the proud comments that their new organ would be "like the one at St. John's.[26] Since 1866 when Waddington left, the choir of men and boys had sung only hymns and canticles except at the major festivals of Christmas and Easter where Lingard demanded a full choral service.

First developments came in May, 1870 when Lingard addressed the parish to ask that music sung at these festivals should extend to ordinary Sundays. What choir, he argued, could achieve a suitable standard of singing on their present work.

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25. e.g. the 1871 Riccarton Anniversary. L.T., 4.7.1871

26. ibid., 5.5.1872

By congregation and choir intoning the whole service (including prayers, creeds and a choral celebration) he hoped the corporate nature of worship and the choir's performance might improve. Simultaneously he pleaded for toleration of the new surplices. Strong opposition to this plan was expected and it came, but nevertheless a compromise was reached: for a trial period of six months Lingard could have his way excepting only the Lord's Prayer and creeds which would remain said.[27]

Results proved disappointing and because attendance declined, in October 1870 the services - extending even to the Christmas ones - reverted to their pre-May pattern. The choir gave up their surplices.[28] However as the brief sally was forgotten, congregations gradually increased and Lingard continued his efforts. Twice he invited the people to his choir practices[29] both times proving unsuccessful. But if the congregations were antipathetic he carefully consolidated the choir's position. In March 1871 the organ contract went to a London builder[30] and by April the free schooling system he arranged for the nine boy choristers had resulted in improved standards of discipline and singing, the repetoire meanwhile growing as F.C.East lithographed sheet music.[31] With this foundation , and the hope that a diocesan occasion would soften parochial feeling, Lingard again ventured to prepare a full choral service for the synod's opening in August of that year. As

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27. ibid., 5.5.1870 28. ibid., 27.12.1871
29. ibid., 26.10.1871; 13.2.1872
30. ibid., 15.3.1871 31. NZCN, June, 1871, p.3

usual they were joined by the other city choirs.

> The service was one of the heartiest and most successful that we have been present at for years. It was, as is the custom /for synod/, full choral. The choir numbered 36; and the chants and hymns were all given not only with precision but with that solemnity and earnestness that elevates the minds of the worshippers. As the long line of white robed choristers, deacons and priests followed by the Lord Primate, entered the church, the congregation all stood and /a hymn/ was sung as a processional. Tallis' service in G was that chosen for the prayers and responses, the Rev. E.A.Lingard acted as precentor. The chants for the Psalms and Canticles were from Mercer's Psalter.[32]

The people had already begun to return; now, seeing the evident success of the synod service, their opposition lessened. By April, 1872 Lingard estimated that five hundred would come on fine Sundays.[33] S.H.Seager erected the new organ in the north aisle[34] and by extending the east end by twelve feet enough room was provided for two double rows of choir stalls along each wall for the surpliced singers.[35] Parker's appointment there as organist[36] must be seen in the light of these events. Lingard's immediate object it seems had been to build up the music to a position where a man of Parker's experience and approach would be attracted. We have already seen that Lingard

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32. ibid., Sept., 1871, p.4

33. L.T., 5.4.1872

34. ibid., 28.9.1871; NZCN, Oct., 1871,p.2, Father of Hurst Seager, the noted architect and no relation to the superintendent of the asylum. (see p.43)

35. ibid., Oct.,1871; L.T., 18.7.1872

36. ibid., 27.4.1872

shared with Parker the goal of achieving full participation in a choral service. There seems little doubt that though musically St. John's services were cause for envy, Lingard was not attracted to their cathedral nature where the people remained silent.

Why Parker first accepted this new post and then two months later went at Canon Cotterill's invitation to become organist and choirmaster at the run-down St. Michael's[37] remains a mystery. One does not even know for certain why he left St. John's after establishing such a record there. A fear that music might be curtailed in the inevitable reaction to Bailey's incumbency, or a personal dislike of the emotional chapel element in the worship - both these provide possible reasons, but the true motive will always remain lost.

However the change does highlight one important feature of these years: the key role of Parker in stimulating choir activity. He had given illustrated lectures, written articles and had taken part in almost every practical form of music making there was in the city; by his eminence he could force a church, musically in the doldrums, to improve its own conditions in the hope of attracting him. But most revealing of all, one had only to compare the struggling efforts of St. Michael's with the assured singing at St. John's to realise the skill and confidence Parker developed in his choir. It is only with this June change, when the

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37. Letter to R.Parker, 27.6.1872, A.T.L. 211/28

first developmental period for choirs was already well under way in other churches, that the music of the pro-cathedral assumes any importance within the diocese. Landergan, as regards choir training, had failed.

The reasons for Landergan's comparative lack of success were not immediately apparent at the start of his brief tenure. In fact it began with hopeful signs. Christmas of 1871 saw at least sixteen boys, by now presumably placed at the east end, surpliced for the first time.[38] And in February, following the annual practice of St. John's, the congregation showed enough confidence in them to sponsor a day's outing.[39]

But the strengths and weaknesses of Landergan's musicianship were particularly unfortunate in the post of organist and choirmaster. He was highly regarded as a keyboard player but had no flair for choral training. His first appearance at a public concert - one which he organised to raise funds for a new organ at St. Michael's - makes this plain. Songs and glees, the staple diet of all such popular concerts in Canterbury - and so well-known that they could hardly have gone wrong - were well received, but it was in the instrumental numbers that Landergan showed his cultivated taste and practical skills. The Lyttelton Times eulogised his performance of a Mozart sonata:

> ...very finely did Mr Landergan develop the beauties of this musical gem; his delicate touch, combined with clear articul-

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38. L.T., 27.12.1871 39. ibid., 2.2.1872

> ation and rapid execution, rendered his performance no ordinary treat.[40]

and the Press, generally severer in criticisms, greeted him warmly:

> The precision and elegance of Mr Landergan's style prove him to be a thorough musician and one whom the musical world of Christchurch may fairly welcome as a decided acquisition.[41]

This bias was to dog all of Landergan's various church careers. Whenever he held a local church position the lure of the organ diverted him from the more substantial task of training the choir. The clearest example comes from St. John's during his first period there between 1872 and '74.

Since the removal of Bailey and Parker's decampment much of the limelight had gone. With some of the principal singers following their organist to St. Michael's and the vestry, abetted by their new incumbent, H.C.M.Watson, intent on regulating music to a lower and less contentious position in the services, Landergan's task was admittedly made no easier. But passively accepting these circumstances, he turned instead to the organ. He raised funds for its enlargement,[42] saw the contract awarded to Jenkins and discussed with Mountfort designs for a new (the present) organ chamber.[43] After nine months the choir's standard had deteriorated to the extent that reform could no longer be delayed. In March,

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40. L.T., 22.9.1871 41. P., 22.9.1871
42. NZCN, May, 1873, p.74
43. L.T., 19.5.1874

with the Easter festival threatingly close, the choir voluntarily resigned en masse to give Landergan a free hand in a fresh selection of voices. There was no bitterness to this action. In addition, two "leading musical amateurs" were engaged to help during the critical period of reforming.[44]

According to the Lyttelton Times this emergency operation proved "highly beneficial" and resulted in a worthy if sober Easter programme. The morning service was chorally rendered, the responses Tallis, Te Deum, Benedictus and creed, Dykes in F (Cathedral through settings) and the anthem, Goss, "Christ our Passover". In the evening the music was repeated, excepting the psalms and canticles, now taken to Anglican chants in the "usual way".[45] But even this moderate peak was never equalled again under his rule for at Christmas, although another Goss anthem was performed, the Te Deum and Jubilate were chanted.[46] The choir sank back into oblivion until the arrival of Neville George Barnett late in 1874 brought the abandonment of laissez-faire policies.[47]

And we find that a similar pattern of neglect

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44. ibid., 27.3.1873 45. ibid., 14.4.1873

46. ibid., 24.12.1872

47. On 11 May Landergan was given a farewell dinner. Presentations were made by Frederick Hobbs and Duncan Ward on behalf of the men and boys respectively. (ibid., 12.5.1874) R.B.Walcott temporarily filled the gap. He was already a choir member and a private singing tutor living in Springfield Road. (ibid., 15.5.1874)

under Landergan had appeared earlier at St. Michael's prior to Parker's tenure. Hopes for any progress beyond the improvements mentioned above (see p.111) were shattered when the new church was opened on 2 May, 1872. What ought to have been a grand occasion verged on the farcical. From the church magazine of the pastoral province came this delightful picture.

> The choir came tumbling in through the vestry door like a flock of sheep escaping from the drafting yard: and when the procession(?) of clergy - who by the bye, came in through the western door - reached the top of the nave, no one seemed to know where to go; Dignitaries, Canons and Deacons got mixed up, and wandered about sometime before getting seated.[48]

The strong similarity with the muddle prevailing at Addington only the previous year (see p.109) showed that true regeneration had hardly begun and that Landergan had failed to tackle the problem of discipline. When Cotterill wrote his letter of invitation to Parker he circumspectly reported "the choir /was/ not as good as could be wished" and hoped for an improvement regarding both efficiency and numbers.

Within three short months of Parker assuming office, that is from July to November, 1872, the tide of misfortune had turned. By a concerted attack on those areas which had received attention in the 'sixties - the school, the boys' choir and an adult group - the parish's musical success this time highlighted the essential right thinking of

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48. NZCN, June, 1872

the previous decade. The new era had been in advance of the right community atmosphere and as Parker's years at St. John's showed, the new organist was one to take advantage of this conducive spirit.

Whatever its fortunes, St. Michael's as the pro-cathedral offered a stability that his former church always lacked. Furthermore it was orientated towards higher ritual practices (especially under the Rev. H.J.Edwards, 1872 - 1876) and it is conceivable that Parker thought once more of S. Matthias!.[49]

Only two weeks after taking up his new appointment he addressed a parish gathering. A choral class was to be constituted "for the purpose of assisting the choir in the practice of sacred music."[50] This would accomodate not only very competent amateurs such as Appleby, the musically-inclined parishioners of St. Michael's who already worshipped there but also his own supporters from St. John's. It was a nucleus designed ultimately to bring about Monk's practices at Stoke Newington.

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49. There is an architectural connection between the the new St. Michael's and the Stoke Newington church. After its ancestor, the first Holy Trinity in Lyttelton (1853-54), C.W.Crisp's St. Michael's is the most Butterfieldian ecclesiological building in New Zealand, a heritage which would have been even more accentuated had the proposed spire been built; note the high clerestory, steep pitched roofs, the very low porch walls supporting the ceiling. (Plates 20,21,22) c.f. Medley's church in New Brunswick - the architect (Medley) was a pupil of Butterfield. See G.L.Hersey, High Victorian Gothic, Baltimore, 1972, pp.90-92

50. L.T., 12.7.1872

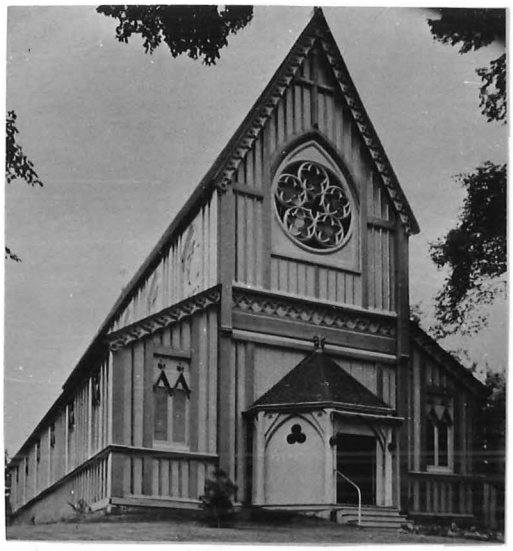

Plate 20: St. Stephen's, New Bruswick,
Architect, E.S.Medley, 1863 - 1864

Plate 21: St. Michael's, Christchurch,
Architect, C.W.Crisp, c.1873

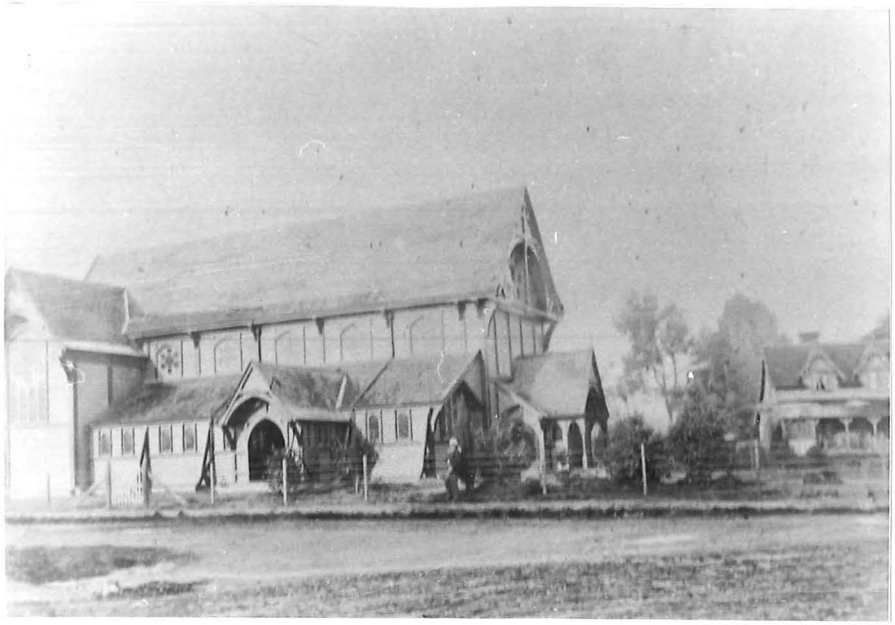

Plate 22: Interior of St. Michael's,
Temporary chancel, c. 1873

Yet by July, 1874, the congregational aspects of full choral services had failed. Over at St. Luke's Lingard suggested that faulty implementation was to blame;[51] later developments in the mid-'seventies point instead to a changing ethos in which such participation harked back unfavourably to earlier times.

On the other hand, the growth of the choir held greater significance for the cathedral project was once more gathering momentum. The school, now under Board of Education control, was fortunate in attracting C.J.Merton from St. Luke's. A gifted teacher like his father, he immediately set about reconstructing the classes helped by two qualified assistants.[52] To Parker, Merton's appointment took a major load off his mind and the liaison between church and school became further strengthened with the announcement that every pupil would be taught music.

Scholarships were reconstituted. Freed from the inconstancies of public subscription they now stood greater chance of success. For every ten boys paying fees, one scholarship would be offered, allowing free education to the winner. The actual selection was to be left in the hands of clergy and choirmaster as before.

With the addition of men, the choir now went ahead rapidly under their new leader. In September they rendered a quartet and chorus, "Blessed are the departed" from Spohr's Last Judgement on

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51. P., 7.7.1874 52. L.T., 6.7.1872

the commemoration of Bishop Patteson's death[53] and a month later a regular routine to serve the choir's inaugural period was finalised. The Church News summed up.

> The appointment of choir scholars, the formation of the choral class, the addition of several adult members to the choir, especially one very noticable bass voice, and though last, not least, the excellent training of the choirmaster, Mr R. Parker, have worked a complete reformation in singing at this church. The Psalms are now chanted on every Sunday in the evening and an anthem is sung on the first Sunday evening in the month.[54]

For the following year the choir consolidated its position. Numbers grew under Parker's magnetism: a mere handful of ill-assorted boys expanded into a well-knit group. An unusual demonstration of its growth and the loyalty it aroused came earlier that year when T.C.Preece, a chorister first in Lyttelton and then at the pro-cathedral, died aged only twenty-five. Headed by Parker, the surpliced choirs of St. Michael's and St. John's lined the path to the Barbadoes Street cemetery and with only a few from Latimer Square, the numbers still totalled between thirty and forty[55] Already there were twenty boys at St. Michael's.[56]

Performance standards also improved and that

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53. ibid., 18.9.1872 Avonside had an entirely plainsong service.

54. NZCN, Nov., 1872, p.3

55. L.T., P., 9.6.1873

56. At a choir party prizes were awarded for attendance and behaviour:- -. Rice (1st), W. Smith (2nd), J. Turnbull & -. Keale (3rd=), -. Mountfort &

Easter "great pains /were/ bestowed upon the musical portions of the services." Though only semi choral, two anthems were prepared and these, together with the hymns, were "admirably rendered by a full choir, leaving nothing to be desired but the organ...."[57] Further results of Parker's confident training were seen by Christmas and when the choir's programme is compared with her neighbours', some justice is paid to her startling progress.

St. Michael's programme[58]

Christmas Eve

Psalms sung in unison to Gregorian tones with free accompaniment on the organ.
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis: Walmisley in d minor.
Excerpts from Messiah.
Carols.

Christmas Morning

Venite: Gregorian tones
Te Deum, Benedicite: Dykes in F (cathedral setting).
Athansian creed: Tallis.
Anthem: Pergolesi, "Glory to God in the highest".
Kyrie: Elvey
Nicene creed: Stainer.
Offertory Sentences: W.H.Monk.
Sanctus: Mendelssohn
Gloria: Helmore

-. Kant (5th =), -. Lillicott (7th), F. Clarke (8th), ibid., 26.9.1873

57. NZCN, May, 1873, p.74 The anthems were by Monk, "The Lord is my strength" and "Now upon the first day of the week". L.T., 14.4.1873

58. ibid., 24.12.1873; 25.12.1873

St. John's[59]

Carol singing by the choir at the midnight service.
Christmas services full choral;
Precis and responses: Tallis
Te Deum and Jubilate: Best in G (double chants)
Anthem: Goss, "Behold I bring you good tidings."
Communion service: Dykes.
Offertory sentences: Barnby.

St. Luke's[60]

Christmas Eve: Choral evensong - probably hymns, psalms and carols only.
Morning service: psalms and canticles to chants.
Kyrie: Mendelssohn.

But already, emerging from these rapid changes, was a trend towards longer and more elaborate music. The services which formally inaugurated the new organ back in July, herald this new departure and the co-operation of other choirs signifies its widespread effect.

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59. ibid., 24.12.1873

60. ibid., 25.12.1873 "Copies of the music of the chants and Kyyie eleison, neatly lithographed, will be distributed through the church, and the object of this is indicated in the heading wherein 'Members of the congregation are requested to join in the chanting of the services.'"

Period 2

Maturity 1874 - 1877

> The congregation of this church /St. Michael's/ have good reason to be congratulated on the marked success which attended the opening of their new organ yesterday. The event was memorable not only for the introduction of an instrument which for power and richness of tone far surpasses any yet imported to this province but also for the great advance in the musical rendering of the services, more especially that held in the evening, beyond anything of the kind hitherto held in the Episcopalian Church in Canterbury.[1]

The advancement lay not so much in the improved singing standard of the hymns, psalms and canticles, nor in Edward's intoning of the prayers for by now this was standard practice during evensong for St. Michael's and St. John's. Instead attention was fixed on the large surpliced choir numbering around fifty which Parker had gathered from the other city churches, and its singing of the greater part of the "Twelfth Mass" and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus".[2] By all accounts the performance was praiseworthy and the tenor soloist in particular (Arthur Appleby?) was singled out for his "almost irreproachable" Et Incarnatus. Both morning and evening sermons paid tribute to the music, Jacobs "very aptly contrasting the musical services of the church of twenty-five years ago with those of the present time when music is taking its proper place in the service

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1. L.T., 26.7.1873 2. NZCN, Aug., 1873, p.115

of the sanctuary."[3] However it was left to the Press to realise the full significance of the occasion.

> The almost complete success of the rendering and the attentive interest manifested by the large congregation who were supplied with the words of the music sung, were amply sufficient to justify what might be by some considered an innovation, viz., the introduction of music of a high class and in an extended form into the church service.[4]

At one level the progress which Parker accomplished at St. Michael's was a symbol of the times, at another it was the springboard for more grandiose developments for already a letter had appeared in the Church News detailing a heady plan to extend the pattern established at the pro-cathedral to the rest of the diocese, if not to the country as a whole.[5] The writer addressed himself to the members of the "Reformed Anglican Church", that is, to those who acknowledged with Jacobs the liturgical improvements towards decency which had taken place.

His plan bears unmistakably the stamp of Parker's 1871 articles especially in the composition of the choir. Both advocated that an all male surpliced body receive regular training from a qualified choirmaster and both envisaged keener men and women from the congregation coming forth to take a subsidiary role in the choral service. Already such a group existed at St. Michael's and during festivals and other major events Parker inevitably drew on the maturer and more powerful

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3. L.T., 26.7.1873 4. P., 26.7.1873

5. NZCN, June, 1873, p.98 Does the nom de plume "A" conceal Appleby's name?

voices of the women in this group to sing demanding solos in oratorios.

But now the whole basis has changed for the elevation of choir and music to the position of supreme importance in the worship was not foreseen by Parker in 1871. The writer assumes that services have a function "beside that of edification", namely "art education". No longer will it be feasible for good will to be the sole generating force if choirs are to realise their full potential in the advancement of culture: professional ethics must prevail. He points out that tougher discipline is imperative and an elaborate system of rewards and punishments offers the best means of achieving this. Rules drawn up by a committee should be imposed under threat of fines, these to be extracted from a graduated scale of payments received by both boys and adults, "a certain amount of fine (and of course misconduct) to involve dismissal." The plan may be harsh but he ends by drawing out the benefits which would accrue if the system was adopted.

> Let anyone, at all connected with music as an art, figure the result of a meeting of three such choirs, say those of S. John's, S. Luke's and S. Michael's and indulge in the contrast it would be sure to present with the present crude, uneducated style of nearly all our amateur singers in public, the greater part of whom can never have learnt their scale, but who have by ignorant or careless encouragement fondly imagined themselves entitled to the name of singers, because in their own way they have sung and received, such as it is, applause.

Immediately objections were raised against this blatent intrusion of commercial values into

religious worship: free education and choir robes should be considered enough reward the protestors argued.[6] On the other hand the ideas of combining choirs on a festival basis appealed to many as outwardly reflecting the spirit of a growing province. The next step came from unexpected quarters. In Auckland the organist of St. Matthew's announced plans for a choral union to make the services of local choirs "more readily available for special or general occasions." The idea struck a sympathetic chord and the Lyttelton Times remarked, "it might profitably be acted upon in Christchurch."[7] However direct action rested for a year as attention centred once more on the building of the cathedral and its future role in the diocese.

At an informal meeting held during the 1873 August Synod,[8] Jacobs outlined proposals for a Cathedral Guild. Its monthly meetings would stimulate interest in the project on a financial and recreational level: subscriptions to boost the building fund and talks on subjects concerning the Church of England were visualised.[9] In September, to coincide with the letting of the first contract, a foundation meeting was held in the College Library to lay down rules and prospectus. By the results people's imagination at least seemed kindled: within a fortnight ninety-seven had joined and in anticipation of future demand one thousand enrolment cards were printed.[10] The

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6. ibid., Aug., 1873 7. L.T., 30.7.1873

8. In contrast to the synodical sessions, these meetings were open to clergy and laity of all denominations.

9. ibid., 16.8.1873 10. ibid., 26.9.1873

first papers established a regular pattern: in November Mountfort described the architectural glories of the new cathedral, in January the uses and abuses of such buildings were outlined by the Dean who advocated daily services,[11] Parker gave a lecture on "Church Music"[12] while the Rev. W.E.Paige elaborated on symbolism and ritual.[13] At once one notices the pre-eminence assumed by High Churchmen in the Guild, a factor which would tell in later developments.

Music was a topic favoured at their meetings and from August onwards, Parker managed to arrange some music as interludes between matters of business. Always he played the harmonium for the opening and closing hymns. In September 1874 he gave yet another paper on the history of hymn tunes, tracing their development "from the plain unbarred melody of the fourteenth century, through the golden age of Tallis and his successors, and the florid debased style of the last century, to the birth of the present generation." Vocal illustrations "admirably rendered by a small but effective choir consisting of three ladies and two gentlemen" depicted each stage.[14] Thus began the Guild choir an elite group formed mainly of singers from the Harmonic Society (which Parker conducted) and St. Michael's. Their selections, either madrigals, anthems or excerpts from oratorios, were designed purely for light relief.

With interest in the Guild's aims now stim-

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11. ibid., 16.1.1874 12. ibid., 20.3.1874
13. NZCN, Oct., 1874, p.140
14. ibid., Oct., 1874, p.135

ulated, an account of the re-opening of Worcester Cathedral attracted widespread attention. In this ancient city a great festival of parish choirs incorporating some fifteen hundred singers had concluded an octave of thanksgiving services. For all present it had been a day of grandeur and impressiveness. Flags had fluttered amid streets decorated with triumphal arches and the night-time illuminations were said to make the city fit for royalty. Its application to Christchurch needed no further stressing and "Aliquis" wrote in to suggest a regular festival of choirs from all denominations.[15] The Anglican authorities were also stirred and the Bishop invited all town choirs to unite for the evensong which opened synod, "so that the service may be in the nature of a choral festival." Both he and the Press hoped it would lead to a permanent Choral Union.[16] A joint practice was held the night before at St. Michael's[17] to ensure familiarity with the psalms and anthem and it is this preparation which marks this effort off from similar occasions in the past (see pp. 123-4, 141) - they had had no rehersal.

The final move came from the Rev. Croasdale Bowen whose previous success in combining choirs for his dedication anniversaries have already been noted. Inspired by the Worcester proceedings, his mind now turned towards the practical issues involved in bringing festivals to the Canterbury diocese. On 17 November, 1874, he read a paper

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15. L.T., 1.10.1874
16. NZCN, Nov., 1874, p.4; P.,19.10.1874
17. L.T., 19.10.1874

to the Cathedral Guild suggesting how one could be formed.[18]

As in the letter of 1873 the twin ideas of progress in music and progress in worship are present. The periodical meetings of choirs Bowen declared, would do much to foster a love for church music and improve standards not only provincially but throughout the country. It was hoped that voluntary collections would provide the finance needed; profits were to be kept to a minimum and donations to charity were not planned. Once before the three city choirs had joined in Harvest Festival at St. John's under Parker to raise funds for victims of the 1872 Greymouth floods but this remained an isolated example.[19] Instead the object was solely to foster all aspects of church music through united counsel and action, leading in the end to the rightful restoration of the "old duty of devoting the highest creation of the beautiful not in one art but in all to God's service", a duty which "is once more regarded in England as incumbent upon all according to their means."[20] Worship itself became an object to be seriously and methodically pursued; no longer it seemed, could one risk being spontaneous.

These ideas were not confined to the Anglican community. Far from it. In the Roman Catholic church a troupe of professional opera singers sang Haydn and Mozart masses whenever they visited the

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18. NZCN, Dec., 1874. p.19; for text see ibid., Jan., 1875, pp.38-39

19. L.T., 23.2.1872

20. NZCN, Jan., 1875, p.39

city[21] while the Methodists, whose services lent themselves uneasily to elaborate music and ritual, moved quickly towards the festival. In mid-1874, not six months prior to Bowen's paper, the Rev. A.R.Fichett addressed the packed Durham Street Wesleyan chapel. He justified the large choir and accompanying band spread accross the front of the church by glorifying the work and benefits of culture, and music in particular.

> Music was of value in education because of its power to waken the sense of beauty - the poetic and artistic insight which enabled us to see the beauty with which the work of the great Architect and Artist everywhere was clothed. This was one of the most valuable portions of intellectual culture. Music would carry on this culture, but only when it (the music) was of the noblest and highest kind. A great deal of music popular in the concert halls had little real poetic or artistic merit. Such festivals as the present had their value in promoting the noblest music in existence.
>
> He next referred to the capacity of music to aid devotions. Its sphere was the feelings, rather than the intellect, but through the feelings it swayed the whole man.... In the oratorio chorus, music called up all her resources for expressing religious feelings. The speaker instanced the "Hallelujah Chorus" of Handel.... Its popularity and power were due, not so much to its excellence as music, though that was high - as to its success in giving the highest expression to the feeling of jubilant religious emotion. If these feelings were not religion they were religious. The music that stimulated or provoked them ought to be redeemed from the associations of the concert hall. No place was so suitable for the performance of oratorios as the church.[22]

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21. e.g. L.T., 18.5.1874; 17.5.1876

22. ibid., 31.7.1874

Bowen, Fichett and Appleby (?) had all looked back to the English festivals, in particular to Ely, Norwich and the Three Choirs. We need go no further to realise that the ethos which shaped their mid-nineteenth-century form was now appearing in Christchurch as people grew accustomed to the stable prosperity. The drastic changes in church life which all three writers witnessed was a product of this security.

Religion and secular music were being separated into compartments. Intellect became the domain of education and morality, while religion had for its sole care the emotional feelings. Thus Fichett, Parker and others could "redeem" oratorios from the profane associations of the music hall. But the equating of religion with sentiment paved an easy way to the notion of religion as an escape from life, a logical development which in England Newman saw only too clearly and abhorred. Despite his own struggle to cultivate a doctrine of reserve, whereby emotions would be repressed through intellectual rigour, he nevertheless felt torn by this peculiarly Victorian dilemma. Finally he sought refuge in Roman Catholicism not for reason's sake but because "he made feeling above all else, the crucial test for discerning the identity of the one true Church.[23]

Others resolved it either by turning away from the Church or by looking to externals within its structure. For the latter, music and the

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23. Symondson, Anthony (Edit.), The Victorian Crisis of Faith, S.P.C.K., 1970, pp.71-87

fine arts in general became objects of adoration, worship and the church building ends in themselves. One must "be prepared not only for improvements in the outward appearance of the church but also in the services," declared the Archbishop of Canterbury.[24] By the 1870s "Culture" had been taken over by the middle classes in a fervid rush for social and spiritual (or moral) self-improvement. What was previously indulged in for recreational enjoyment is thus transformed into a serious undertaking, for culture has been elevated to the rank of religion. In the final analysis Fichett's distinction between feeling as "religion" and feeling as "religious" appears sophistic.

Two London churches reveal the extent to which the original Tractarian congregational ideal was swamped by these evolutionary tendencies within the Broad Church - and indicate as well, the way in which Christchurch worship was heading.

As a convinced Tractarian Benjamin Webb had opposed Neale's attempts to introduce hymns into the ritualistic service in 1842. Between 1852 and 1854 he had modified his ideas and collaborated with Neale, then working on the texts of Helmore's Hymnal Noted (1854 enlarged edition). A decade later and the transformation was complete:

> At S. Andrew's, Wells Street, Webb found himself inducted in 1862 to administer a wealthy and fashionable congregation for whom the exhibitions of the Royal Academy and the operatic performances of Covent Garden formed regular social events. His

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24. Speech to the Diocesan Church Building Society, August, 1874, quoted in ibid., p.114

> new church, Webb resolved, should bear the benefits which modern artists - including musicians - would confer upon it. He thus set about adorning the fabric of S. Andrew's with the best sculpture, furniture and stained glass that the bounty of his congregation could provide. Thus, too, he appointed Barnby at the age of twenty-seven, to bring to the services there the most admired specimins of modern composition.[25]

Later Barnby took charge of the choir at St. Anne's, Soho, building it up until it became a miniature all male choral society, with its sixty-four members spilling over into the transepts. At the full choral morning and evening services, elaborate settings of canticles and anthems, sometimes to instrumental accompaniment, held in silent rapture an admiring congregation, most of whom came from long distances to attend. But to Curwen these services presented a facade; they were "only a new illustration of the difficulty of seeking at once the ends of art and the ends of worship."[26]

Thus with trends more clearly delineated in overseas examples we can guage in perspective the strength of external forces already changing the pattern of worship in Christchurch.

Work on the regulations for the Diocesan Choral Association (hereafter D.C.A.) as it became known, went ahead quickly. By March 1875 several choirs had announced their co-operation: besides the city churches, Avonside, Merivale, Lyttelton, Rangiora, the Guild choir and the boys from

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25. Rainbow, op.cit., p.277
26. Curwen, op.cit., p.182

Christ's College under Mr Dawe accepted membership;[27] surprisingly Riccarton, Bowen's church, did not enter. The administrative committee elected Parker and Barnett choirmaster and organist and under these men the D.C.A. planned to sing at the anniversaries of the Cathedral Guild, the annual synod service and for any other occasion which demanded a representative body.

This was Barnett's first official position in Christchurch for he had not yet taken up St. John's. His past remains enigmatic. Though not High Church, he shared with Parker an intense interest in church music, fostered by visits to various London churches and from studious reading.[27] For his fellowship at the College of Organists (founded only in 1864) he had read widely in the history of the Prayer Book and choral service, dwelling especially on the writings of Elizabethan scholars and musicians. His experience and knowledge, more academic than Parker's, soon made him the city's second authority in this field.

But ironically the dream of a true festival atmosphere emanating from the D.C.A. never materialised in the 'seventies. As events showed its main purpose lay in providing an example and stimulus for suburban choirs to develop along their own lines by facilitating an interchange of ideas. The intent was social but whether through shifting population or disappointment by members over the lack of dramatic spectacle at the 1875 festival opening this never came about. Perhaps the organisers

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27. NZCN, Oct., 1880, p.395

were too reticent over the choice of music for what the choirs were required to sing on these occasions seemed barely more than what St. Michael's and St. John's were doing on Sunday evenings - or what had been the pattern at previous synods. A few joint practices soon enabled hymns, psalms and canticles and even an anthem to be sung and the choristers felt it did not stretch them enough: after Worcester it was too much of an anti-climax.

However the D.C.A. did try one new innovation - an all male adult choir to sing probably in unison. One cannot ascribe this to Parker however much he may have welcomed it as harking back to Stoke Newington days. It seems instead to have been the work of two clergymen. At the opening of the St. Michael's organ in 1873 Jacobs had argued the desirability of choristers being communicants - hence the lack of boys - and now, with the festival service being held at St. Luke's, one had to respect Lingard's known antipathy to women choirmembers, even in a minor capacity.[28] According to all those present the strong male voices made a "striking and impressive" impact especially in the Gregorians which were sung at both morning and evening services.[29] But this character did not survive for it was too unrepresentative. Women and boys joined in the later festivals while Gregorians, a hallmark of the High church, were replaced by Anglican chants.

Lack of sufficient music partly explains why the D.C.A. was condemned to the routine and seemingly unambitious pieces. Only St. John's

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28. L.T., 22.4.1876 29. NZCN, June, 1875

and St. Michael's had collections of any sort - in 1876 both churches had libraries worth an estimated twenty-five pounds each[30] - but numbers were held only in small sets. The anthem in particular always gave problems and in August of 1875 the committee were compelled to borrow multiple copies of the Goss, "Praise the Lord, O my soul" from the sister association at Auckland.[31] Consequently as a practical step towards alleviating this deficiency, "a library of good music from which all choirs may borrow" was mooted[32] and in 1876, with the Association still free from debt, it became a reality. A list of the music held shows the new chromatic taste creeping in.

	Anthems[33]	
Goss	Praise the Lord, O my soul	(52)
Goss	Stand up and bless the Lord	(48)
Ward	Thy word is a lantern	(72)
Beethoven	Halellujah	(48)
Mendelssohn	Sing to the Lord (for double choir)	(48)
Stainer	O Sion that bringest good tidings	(30)
Spohr	How lovely are thy dwellings fair	(30)
	Services	
Tours	Evensong in F	(48)
Smart	Te Deum in F[34]	(30)
Hopkins	Evensong in B flat	(58)

30. L.T., 22.4.1876 31. NZCN, Sept., 1875, p.127

32. P., 25.5.1875

33. ibid., 24.3.1876 Figures in brackets give the number of copies.

34. Plainsong with elaborate chromatic harmonies - see Rainbow, op. cit., p.272

Merbecke	Nicene Creed	(30)
Stainer	Nicene Creed - founded on Parisian tones.	(30)

Encouraged by this tangible proof of success the committee promised "as soon as funds would permit", to incorporate psalters and hymnals in their collection. It had long been understood that true progress would come only when uniformity was imposed on the many diverse systems of pointing then prevalent. This chronic ailment was indeed a cancer and one of Bowen's hopes for this scheme was that something could be done in this direction.

> The periodical meetings of choirs /he had told the Cathedral Guild,/ would afford valuable opportunities for counsel and action in all matters relating to church music. They would lead to the adoption, not only of a common selection of hymns and tunes, but which is on no less importance in any combined action of church choirs, to a common method of pointing the psalms. I know nothing more bewildering to an occasional visitor than the diversity of pointing which he finds at present existing in the various churches of the diocese. In one church Mercer is the authority, in another Ouseley and Monk, in a third the clergyman or choirmaster, dissatisfied with all published methods, has a printing of his own.[35]

A few sample copies of the Cathedral Psalter[36] were imported. This book offered a wide variety of tunes and in England started to equal Hymns

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35. NZCN, Jan., 1875, p.38

36. The Cathedral Psalter,...together with the Canticles and Hymns of the Church...pointed for chanting by H. Flood Jones, J.Troutbeck, James Turle, J. Stainer and Joseph Barnby, London, 1874

Ancient and Modern in popularity. The committee declared its satisfaction and hoped a similar acceptance would come here. Not only would the choirs benefit but congregational singing also, for in a land where there was a large shifting population, pointing variations left many in a despairing silence. Despite the contrary pressures working against their ideal, this attempt to boost the ordinary chanting from the nave was an influence of the High Church party within the Guild: Bowen and Parker were among its supporters. But a glance at the editors of the Cathedral Psalter, and the composers represented in the Association's library, reveals the growing pervasiveness of Broad Church taste.

Parker's own influence in the running of these early D.C.A. festivals should be noted; in fact the choirs depended on him. Throughout 1875 and 1876 he managed full rehearsals before the final performance, coaxing the utmost out of them: but whenever he was absent hopes and standards invariably sank. For example, in 1875 they collapsed overnight when Parker suddenly became ill and could not conduct.[37] Again it was he who played a key role in reviving the Association after a temporary relapse caused through top heavy administration.[38] The 1877 festival was a success but it was also the last, for Parker, the only person who could have drawn it through deteriorating times, left shortly after to take up a position in Wellington.

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37. L.T., 19.10.1875; NZCN, Nov., 1875
38. L.T., 24.10.1876

One must admit that during its brief existance in the 'seventies the aims set out by Bowen were not, indeed could not have been met for they were essentially long term ideals. His very idea of a festival to take place on the Worcester scale was hopelessly impractical for the choirs, and Christchurch's musical society as a whole, was disunited. Yet for all this the D.C.A. left its mark. Its real influence lay in the ordinary parish where the problems of organising combined choir rehersals from numbers so great and disparate were absent. It is to the individual parishes and their development that we must now turn as people increasingly took hold of externals in their search for an anchor.

At the town churches of St. John's (from late 1874 under Barnett) and St. Michael's, services were full choral. The prayers, at least to the anthem which concluded the formal part of matins and evensong, were regularly intoned by Edwards and C.J.Merton (after his ordination) or by the chief adult chorister.[39] Responses were taken to Tallis' settings with occasional samplings of more florid versions. Improvised harmonies on the organ always accompanied the Lord's Prayer, a practice aimed at illustrating the meaning, while at the pro-cathedral the creed was invariably intoned to Merbecke or Goss (the latter printed in Mercer).

For the psalms Parker regularly used Gregorians though Anglican chants tended to replace them at

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39. ibid., 12.5.1871

major feasts; certainly under Barnett only the latter appear. Services by cathedral composers offered simple yet for the most part effective alternatives to chants at the same time providing the best in modern conservative Anglican taste. An anthem could be worked up for the Sunday evening while on more important days two might be sung.[40]

This stress on music Edwards heartily endorsed. He believed, like his counterpart Webb, that the service should be the very best that could be offered and that "those now held in the church tended to raise the feelings of the worshippers." "Although when they were first introduced some could not take part in them, it was merely a matter of education."[41]

This personal combination of Parker and Edwards - both governed, it would seem, by the idea of elevating the person's soul through music and art in general - enabled the pro-cathedral choir to perform extended works at the important religious festivals. At their 1873 anniversary service, and with their new organ to accompany them, the choir performed the greater part of Spohr's Last Judgement in place of the anthem.[42] Subsequent festivals provided occasions for Messiah,[43] Mendelssohn's Hymn of Praise[44] and masses by Henry Farmer[45] and Weber.[46]

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40. NZCN, Sept., 1875, p.133; Oct., 1875, p.146; Nov., 1875, p.17; Dec,, 1875, p.28

41. L.T., 15.4.1875 42. NZCN, Oct., 1873, p.140

43. The whole first part was sung on Christmas Eve. L.T., 24.12.1873; also NZCN, Oct., 1875; P., 17.12.1875, 17.4.1876

44. L.T., 7.10.1874

Two contemporary comments reveal the expansion of the art education theory in the church service since 1873. Both were written after performances by the St. Michael's choir of the Last Judgement. The first from 1873:

> The effect of such a service, chorally conducted, is highly imposing and calculated to raise pious and religious feelings, even in dull and phlegmatic natures. The entrance of the long drawn choir, duly vested, as all choirs should be, with the clergy and Bishop, their voices with organ accompaniment, swelling louder and louder in raising the chant and hymns of praise...is alone calculated to produce strong emotions."[47]

After a two year interval the identification of music, feeling and religion is closer but more important is the tone of familiarity over such services.

> The reverent and careful rendering of such grand pieces of sacred music is not only delightful and refreshing, but very impressive.... It serves to redeem our services from the charge of monotonous uniformity.[48]

The period when Parker was at St. John's now seems remote indeed. In 1871 the Bishop had spoken against a projected performance of Elijah in the church, arguing that only a general synod could

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45. ibid., 26.12.1874; NZCN, May, 1875, p.8 Farmer was a Nottingham organist and a connection may have been established through John Parker, Robert's brother, then living there.

46. ibid., Nov., 1876, p.2

47. ibid., Nov., 1873. Note the choir's improvement since the 1871 consecration. See p.129

48. ibid., Oct., 1875, p.140

sanction such "distinct deviations from the authorised services of worship."[49] Controversy had completely disappeared when in 1874 this church followed in the wake of St. Michael's with Barnett presenting excerpts from the Messiah at each Christmas and Easter.[50]

At St. Luke's Lingard also desired at least some progress on their present rather plain services, but in this he felt constrained by the wishes of his parishioners. For the sake of internal harmony he respected their views. However, determined once more to put his case, he spoke out at the 1874 annual meeting. All wanted music to be worthy of its place in worship, he told them, but from experience he knew that "good men would not attend /the choir/ Sunday after Sunday unless there were anthems or a choral service."[51] The congregation were adamant; they desired no more music than at present being sung, mainly for religious reasons but also out of fear that it was beyond the meagre capabilities of the choir to accomplish such music decently. The choir had suffered, it was true, especially under the dual control of Lingard and R.T.Searell.

At first the partnership worked well but then disruption came as Lingard learnt that his organist was also training a Methodist choir. Had there been a written contract,[52] had James Buller, the

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49. ibid., August, 1871, p.2

50. e.g. L.T., 24.12.1874; 13.4.1875; 6.5.1875; 27.12.1875; 17.4.1876; P., 2.4.1877, L.T., 26.12.1877

51. NZCN, August, 1874, p.112

52. P., 17.4.1874

Methodist minister, not leapt in with emotional charges of "priestism" against the whole Anglican Church and had Lingard not drained his own emotional resources through overwork it may never have happened. In the end both men resigned from choir duties and a Mr Dugdale from Timaru was appointed to sole charge.[53]

When the parochial meeting took place barely two months later, the choir was still in a state of turmoil. Alexander Lean asked whether the boys were even instructed. Yes, replied Lingard, once a week under the solfa system, and any who joined the choir were tested before final acceptance.[54] Thus the meeting came to a stalemate and the musical pattern remained unaltered.

Other churches made minor improvements. At Avonside a new stone chancel (donated by Mrs Palairet), organ and transepts were designed by Mountfort and built, all visually and accoustically improving the stature of the choir.[55] As with Merivale in 1881[56] when the male members of the choir took their places in the chancel, they permanently adopted the surplice.[57] The interior of Riccarton church in 1880 (Plates 23,24) demonstrates choir seating arrangements when the building was in a transitional stage: the women and girls would sit in the old sanctuary, three

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53. NZCN, May, 1874, p.74
54. P., 7.7.1874
55. NZCN, Nov., 1874; P., 10.3.1877
56. NZCN, Jan., 1881, p.439
57. L.T., 26.12.1876

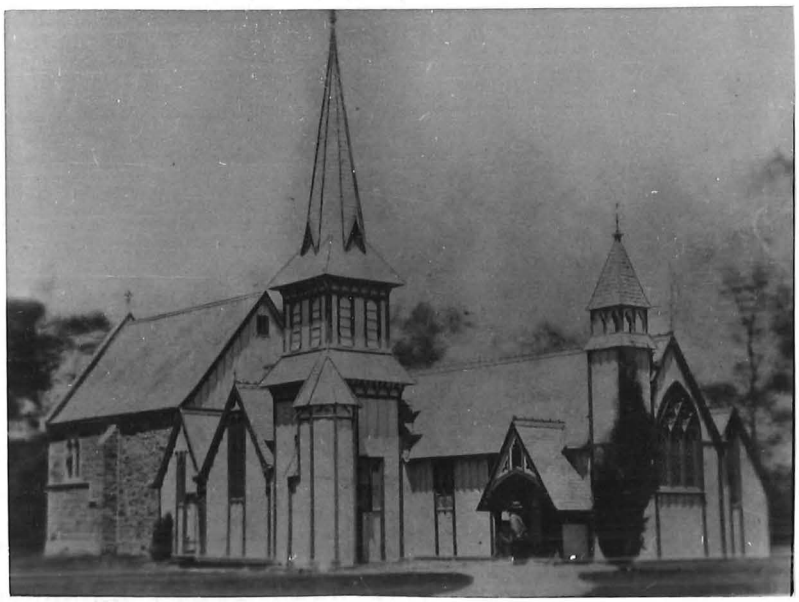

Plate 23: St. Peter's, Riccarton
c. 1880

Plate 24: Interior of Riccarton Church, c.1880. Hill organ installed 1879; the stalls for surpliced choir men and boys are elevated, those below, presumably for the women members.

steps below the men. Full equality did not come in any church until August, 1892 when, robed and wearing trencher caps, St. John's, Latimer Square admitted them to the chancel. (Plate 25.) "The effect on the eye is bright and cheerful," said one reporter.[58]

At Merivale additions to the nave allowed a compromise between the aspirations of the choir in Gwalter Palairet (organist and Choirmaster 1874-76) and the restraint of Knowles. From 1874 the choir sat round a small pipe organ on a dias at the west end,[59] a position out of the congregation's sight but not without aural benefits. In 1876, after Knowles had left, they reverted once more to the front of the nave.[60]

Among other developments in the choral services of this period was the acceptance of solos. Naturally this came mainly at St. John's and St. Michael's where standards had developed most and the dignity of the worship would not be impaired. Indicative of the growing secularism of choir activities, soloist names now appeared in the local papers. The Lyttelton Times in reporting the services inaugurating the St. Michael's organ, had refrained from mentioning particular singers and only with reluctance criticised the performance. A year later, in 1874 we are told by the same paper that Miss A.S.Taylor (one of Parker's favourite singers) and Miss Fairhurst sang the soprano and alto duet in Mendelssohn's "I waited for the Lord"

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58. ibid., 5.8.1892; 6.8.1892; 8.8.1892
59. NZCN, Sept., 1874
60. L.T., 13.10.1876

Plate 25: St. John's choir in the 1890s

Plate 26: Philipstown Church in the 1890s

(St. Paul) while Appleby held the tenor leads.[61] Some solists came in from a distance to assist, like Charles Merton from Rangiora and Miss L. Marshman, organist and choirmistress at Sumner.[62] At St. John's Barnett could depend on Mrs E.H.Palmer, Miss Rowley, A.C.Bell and James Knox, the latter choirmen of long standing, for solo work.

Other signs of growing professionalism include the gradual replacement of the verbal statement by the written contract and music specially written for the local choirs. Service settings, responses, hymn tunes and anthems all arose as the occasion demanded; Barnett wrote an extended Christmas anthem for tenor and treble solos and choruses.[63]

Choir activities further increased by commitments outside their recognised role. Whether raising funds for more music,[64] additions to the organ,[65] new choir robes or for purely secular reasons such as parish concerts, the demands grew. Members led a busy life: from school or job in the day time, many would go to choral society practices in the evening and on a Friday night attend a choir rehersal at the church. Outside concerts, undertaken as choirs gained confidence, meant extra work.

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61. ibid., 7.10.1874

62. P., 13.4.1877 C.J.Merton was vicar there.

63. L.T., 26.12.1874

64. e.g. Merivale, L.T., 16.6.1876

65. e.g. Avonside, ibid., 28.4.1876; Kaiapoi, ibid., 2.12.1875; St. John's, ibid., 20.4.1876

Complete performances of cantatas began in 1874 when Parker decided to pay off the organ debt at St. Michael's. He selected J.F.Barnett's The Ancient Mariner and with assistance from leading local amateurs and accompanied by an orchestra led by Charles Bonnington, the church choir gave this as the major part of a concert that March. So successful was it the Lyttelton Times asked for a repeat.[66] Two years later these concerts had become an annual event and, with co-operation from Lean's Orchestral Society, it was at such a one that Wagner was first performed locally with the choral march from Tannhauser.[67]

St. John's was more circumspect and the public notices following Parker's concerts rarely came its way. Nevertheless, by April, 1875, a junior choir had been formed under Walcott, intent on weekly recitals in aid of music and other books. Though their repetoire was limited to songs, public acclaim was sufficient for them to appear at two further entertainments in the schoolroom with the Excelsior Christy Minstrels, where they gave solos and dramatic recitations.[68]

But in the midst of all this development the once eager desire of congregations to sing hymns and psalms became swamped. Too often only choir and organist were in a position to know the frequent changes of chant that would be forth-

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66. ibid., 27.3.1874; 10.5.1874

67. ibid., 28.7.1876

68. A.Walcott, G.Pengelly, D.Ward, E.Mountfort, F.Gee, E.Winter, W.Hill, C.Hill, W.Thompson were some of the boys who took part. ibid., 10.5.1875; 18.5.1875; 29.5.1875

coming. Barnett's practice illustrates a custom common in many English churches where the choir had developed along similar lines.

> There is too great a tendency to consider the chant as a mere vehicle for the recitation of the words, instead of a means of giving force and expression to them. The very best way (if not the prettiest) to perform them is to have the choir and congregation sing a melody in unison and let the sense of the words be demonstrated by varied harmonies on the organ....
>
> But where this style is not possible, or meets with vigourous objection, a serious endeavour must be made to meet the case by arranging a chant for each change of sentiment. For instance in the case of Psalm 78 I myself use no less than eleven changes: viz., at verses 9,13,18,26,31,38, 41,53,57,and 69. I employ only three simple chants, so that there is no great difficulty; by this means I am able to secure a sensible rendering which otherwise would be hardly possible.[69]

Faced with this, in addition to the service settings and anthems, it is small wonder that congregations maintained a stunned silence, even in the hymns. Some enjoyed it, the majority accepted it and the few protests went unheeded. Naturally as travelling difficulties lessened people came into the city from the suburbs, and Merivale was only one parish where funds slackened off under the lure of the full choral service.[70]

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69. NZCN, Oct., 1880, pp.395-396. Parker would devote one verse to women only, another to men or alternate unison chanting with harmony. ibid., Nov., 1875, p.16

70. St. Mary's, Merivale, Vestry Minutes, 1875, passim

But, as we shall see in the next few years, they remained an attraction only so long as the external conditions that gave rise to them lasted.

One small but important consideration remains and that is the extreme ritualistic position which briefly arose in Canterbury during the mid-'seventies. No topic was so controversial nor so widespread at this time for it affected the whole Anglican communion. In England, trials and imprisonments of clergy for their beliefs revealed an intense and rigid bigotism in those who only half understood the real issues. National dailies and church magazines of every colour revealed the intransigence over superficialities. In Christchurch tempers could be no less vitriolic.

Within five months of the H.E.Carlyon taking up duties at Kaiapoi (1875-77) his novel ceremonial had attracted widespread attention, particularly the eastward facing position for the celebration and creeds, the elevation of the elements and his encouragement of private confession. The storm became a central issue at Synod in October, 1875 with the clergy endeavouring to calm outraged opinion. Jacobs said he had always faced east and no complaints had ever come his way. To Harper many of the opinions were of academic value only. Though he personally agreed with some, he was forced to obey a Canon law which at that time forbade them. If Carlyon could come to some agreement with his church wardens, the Bishop would accept the outcome, officially legal or otherwise.[71]

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71. L.T., 15.12.1875

By February the rift had resulted in an almost empty church,[72] the parishioners prefering either to stay away completely or make the journey to other churches. But undeterred by the mass exodus, Carlyon carried on with a few loyal supporters; indeed for a man in his precarious position he proceded boldly. In July, despite a debt of fifty pounds, an organ was installed in the church as the first step towards improving the music.[73] The next was choir.

On the 14 August, 1876, a Monday, choristers appeared for the first time. At this evensong, the boys robed in cassocks and surplices, entered the church by the west door, filed up the nave and paired off into the front stalls. The ceremony was short; Carlyon read a few prayers and preached a sermon addressed specifically to the boys. Then came the formal induction, each chorister as he was admitted taking his seat on the Decani or Cantoris side as directed.[74]

Ten days afterwards the church was consecrated, the ceremony again taking place on a week day for fear of arousing violence. However, fears proved unfounded as the official party numbered almost as many as the congregation: in a church built for

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72. ibid., 2.2.1876 73. ibid,, 22.7.1876

74. ibid., 16.8.1875 Norwich Cathedral started this new rite in 1871 when each chorister was admitted with a little form of prayers, an address by the Dean and an investiture with the surplice. Likewise choir prayers in the vestry began at the same time: Chester, 1869; Lincoln, 1871; St. Paul's, 1872. Chadwick, Owen, The Victorian Church, London, 1966, II, p.376

120 people, barely thirty turned up. Ritualistic trappings abounded. Pictures, branded by the parishioners as ikons, hung on the walls, and triple-branched candle sticks lit up the nave. At the east end four rows of choir stalls pointed optimistically to the day when twenty boys could fill them while in the sanctuary a new carpet in "gold ecclesiastical pattern" led the eye towards the altar illuminated with six candles amongst the vases of flowers. The altar itself was covered in white linen.

At ten-thirty precisely, eight choristers under their choirmaster, Frederick Say Funston, headed the procession of clergy up the centre aisle, chanting Psalm 24, probably to the Tonus Peregrinus. In the evening the service was full choral, a practice maintained there till Carlyon was forced out.

Processional hymn from Hymns Ancient and Modern.
Psalms 84, 122
Magnificat 5th tone, 1st ending
Nunc Dimittis 3rd tone, 1st ending
Anthem Hymn 242
Recessional hymn[75]

Simple by contemporary standards in Christchurch, it yet remains the only attempt to implement Gregorians at Helmore's level of authenticity in the local churches. We cannot be absolutely certain but when Milner gave his speech on Gregorian music to the Cathedral Union in 1885 he was surely thinking of this church. His euphemistic conclusion

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75. P., 25.8.1876

is fully in keeping with a person whose religious sentiments were identical to Carlyon though perhaps not so tenaciously maintained. The whole paragraph, long though it is, warrants quoting.

> With respect to the use of Gregorian music in the Church in New Zealand, I regret I have but little to say, there being no statistical data published regarding the musical services of the Churches...; but I question, if there be any one church where Plain Song can be said to be in use. No doubt, some of the Tones are used in many of the church in New Zealand, but it is to be feared, only in the form of the Anglican chant. The attempts to reduce them to the limits of the Anglican form, necessarily gently curtails their beauty, and leaves them in so dwarfed and stunted a condition, that they are but caricatures of what they profess to be. Some seven years ago, an attempt was made to chant the psalms at Evensong to the Gregorian Tones, in a church in the immediate vicinity of Christchurch. The then choirmaster, was an enthusiastic admirer of the old Church tones, added to which he had a thorough practical knowledge of the correct method of performing them. Under his most efficient direction, the music was well rendered by the choir, but the effect of the congregation was most unmistakeable; they listened in respectful silence, with an air of petrified astonishment, to the (to them) novel sounds. Very shortly, the incumbent and churchwardens were interviewed, and a change to the old system earnestly besought. The attempt was persevered in for fully a year, in the hope that a fair trial might induce the congregation, not only to become reconciled with, but to use the tones themselves; but as no such happy result eventuated, but rather increased opposition was experienced, the attempt was reluctantly abandoned.[76]

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76. Milner, op.cit., p.6

In colonial terms, Funston must have been a remarkable musician. His background unfortunately remains closed yet his knowledge of plainsong and an obvious familiarity with the music of the Chapel Royal[77] poses the question: had he studied there under Helmore? Funston, however, stayed at Kaiapoi for as long as Carlyon, training the boys in chanting while his daughter, by all accounts an accomplished musician, played the organ.

Carlyon's chief fault lay in adhering too rigidly to doctrines his congregation would never have accepted. In October of 1877, following judgement on a similar case at Folkeston, Kent, Harper condemned the practices[78] leaving no alternative but to expel his priest. When Carlyon returned to England in December, the choir and all its music closed down.

After this, Funston remained at Kaiapoi for just over a year until his greengrocer's shop went bankrupt in 1879. With two financial disasters in three years to his credit, he moved to Christchurch to the parish closest in sympathy with his High Church leanings - Avonside. His daughter had already shifted there in mid-1878 to take regular organ lessons from Barnett.[79] By March, 1879 the two were in charge of the music at Holy Trinity, Avonside, raising the choir to a pitch never equalled there before.

In London we saw how Benjamin Webb had swung

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77. L.T., 5.4.1880; Rainbow, op.cit., p.222
78. NZCN, Oct., 1877, supplement
79. L.T., 21.12.1878, see also p.118

round within the space of a decade to embrace Broad Church attitudes to music. (see pp. 144-145) The same can now be traced in Canterbury: Kaiapoi afforded an example of the pure Tractarian or Ritualistic position and at Avonside on odd Sundays one could still hear the ancient plainsong, but more frequently now it was in its corrupted Anglican form as Funston was forced to compromise. Anthems too, ranged from Farrent's "Lord for thy tender mercies sake"[80] or "Thou visitest the earth" of Greene[81] to modern compositions by Barnby and Stainer. The Easter services of 1880 show this transitional form.

Easter Day[82]

8.30 a.m. "Holy Eucharist". "The music, ancient plainsong, was well rendered - in fact superior to anything attempted here, being more elaborate than that given at other churches in the city."

Matins: full choral, Stainer's 4th series Gregorian.

Evensong: full cathedral service with processional and recessional hymns.
Anthem: J. Sewell, "This is the day"
Responses by T.T.Trimnell (on the tones)
"A flute concerto given as an offertoire, was greatly appreciated, a most profound silence being observed during its execution."

> The attendance at this church since the introduction of the Incumbent, the Rev. W.W.Pascoe, has steadily increased, and there

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80. P., 27.12.1880 81. L.T., 5.4.1880
82. NZCN, April, 1880, p.272

> is no doubt that a very prosperous era has set in with regards to church matters at Avonside. The boys' singing is a special feature of this church. Miss Funston presided at the organ, Mr Funston being at his accustomed post as Director of the Choir.

But for practical purposes the days of Gregorians were numbered as the 'eighties brought new conditions and different problems. The Christchurch Gregorian Choral Association, precariously established at Merivale with the aim of reaching the standards set at All Saints, Margaret Street in London,[83] was a dilettante society having no influence in the services. Funston himself seems, strangely, to have taken no interest in it - at least his name does not appear on the committee. In 1882 he left Avonside to join the Cathedral choir.[84]

Even Milner was content to avoid any direct championing of the tones in his article: he endeavoured "to keep the via media between an unfair repudiation of the just claims and intrinsic merits of Plain Song and the prejudices and injudicious admiration of its advocates, who would appear deaf to the beauty of all modern strains."[85]

The same year, 1885, Harper consecrated the Philipstown church.[86] Under Mountfort's persuasion this would become the first church in New Zealand to accept ritualistic practices at Carlyon's

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83. ibid., July, 1881, p.684

84. McKenzie, G.M., The History of Christchurch Cathedral, Christchurch, 1931, pp. 84-85

85. Milner, op.cit., p.11

86. L.T., 1.6.1885

level. But no trace of Gregorians remain despite the presence of a small trained choir; their music is no different from what other churches were then singing.

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Period 3

Disintegration 1877 - 1879

Rapid progress made a certain superficiality inevitable. The musical character of the services had changed out of all recognition within seven years. Communion, Matins and evensong were now regularly choral and non-congregational, longer anthems highlighted festivals and all churches had men women and boys in their choirs. Even Papanui had launched out in 1874 to embrace this pattern under the more liberal guidance of the Rev. F.G.Brittan[1] while three years later Lingard grudgingly accepted women into St. Luke's choir. His hand was forced in this matter for the closing of the church school in 1876 had soon reduced the number of boy choristers and the attendance of those who remained then became so spasmodic that their strength was quite inadequate.

But despite this high level of music in the

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1. L.T., 26.12.1874. At the consecration of the new church, the present one, Brittan invited the choirs of Merivale and St. Michael's to sing, Parker conducting. Afterwards, at an evening concert, they performed carols, songs and glees. NZCN, Jan., 1878; L.T., 22.12.1877

service, two matters still attracted concern: on the one hand congregational singing had declined - especially in the city centre where the suburban churches were supposed to look for guidance; on the other, performance standards of these choirs had not improved as dramatically as some would have wished. Contemporary reviews showed, by focusing of individuals, that it was the soloists rather than the main corpus who provided the inspiration.

Formal criticism arose when an editorial in the Lyttelton Times condemned the sham harboured in ninety per cent of the city's musical endeavours: only the Orchestral Society emerged unscathed.[2]

Choral societies and church choirs bore the brunt of this attack. The majority of singers, the editorial alleged, contributed more to the decor than to the performance. In the churches, "sensationalism", "impractical anthems" and "difficult canticles entrusted to the tender mercy of colonial boys and musically uninstructed choirs" were held responsible for this lack of progress. The article continued:-

> We presume that the aims of church music are twofold - to dispose by its influence on the feelings to a devotional frame of mind and to assist in giving utterance to those heartfelt emotions, for whose expression speech is inadequate. Can the music in vogue in our churches be said to fulfil either office? It is not well enough done for the first, and being uncongregational is useless for the second; with so much grand and simply solemn music by the old masters

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2. ibid., 30.4.1875

> at their command, why will our organists and choirmasters persist in parading the meretricious compositions of the fashionable writers of modern organ music, more suited for the pianoforte than for the organ?

This harsh upbraiding was opportune for though it came five weeks later, the D.C.A.'s inauguration service must still have been fresh in everyone's mind. If reform was needed, and the editor clearly thought so, then what better than to strike while the iron was hot, while the Association's committee was itself considering steps to improvement.

The attack came from an outsider in R.A.Loughnan. Loughnan, then newly appointed editor of the Lyttelton Times (1875 - 1889), had been born in India and educated at Dublin. He was a musician, a journalist and a Roman Catholic. Arriving in New Zealand in 1865 at the age of twenty-four, he sank his money into land near Cromwell but this failed and he turned instead to writing music criticisms for the Otago Daily Times. From 1875 he lived in Christchurch, fourteen years later he moved to Wellington to become editor of the Catholic Times and a member of the Basilica choir.

His criticism of church music was therefore based not from any particular religious point of view as previous articles and speeches had done, but on aesthetic judgements. Did Loughnan perhaps detect disenchantment over the whole choir structure as progress toward the goals of "art education" became noticably slower? Could the choirs be just another pleasant diversion, in effect, a seemingly pointless game?

But prevailing optimism gave no quarter to Loughnan's comments and they received only tepid public support. Some five months later an independent quarrel with the worship prevailing in city churches arose, which censured the dismal lack of congregational support. Some blamed the choir, others the congregation. "A Ritualist", himself a member of the congregation, put the responsibility on to the latter. If anyone in that part of the church, he charged,

> makes the slightest attempt to join with the choir in singing and responding, heads are immediately turned, there is nudging and looking, and very often a tittering, which produces anything but a comfortable feeling. No wonder then, that people with every intention of being devout, give up singing or intoning altogether.[3]

However nothing was done until 1877 when a series of articles repeating the earlier accusations appeared in the Church Magazine, a journal formed during the Carlyon affair "to present a ventilation of views unedited by officials."[4] Perhaps moved by the tremendous acclaim given Moody and Sankey's London revival meetings, it came out strongly on the side of congregational singing and against the flamboyance of the choirs.

> The true idea of music in divine service is that it shall be the work and offering of the worshippers. Choirs are made use of to aid congregations in the duty which is properly theirs. Choirs and organs exist for the sake of congregations, not congregations for the sake of choirs. The present tendencies towards more ornate church music may possibly

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3. NZCN, Nov., 1875, p.16
4. P., 29.1. 1876

gratify the taste of the few, but we greatly fear it is injuring the devotion of the many.[5]

The whole basis of this inordinate development had been built on dubious ground: its claim that choirs automatically fostered strong congregational singing had proved spurious and its appeal to aesthetics false for "beauty consists in nothing more than fitness" - a new and distinctly modern idea. Finally, any hankering after ornate pre-Reformation practices should be condemned as ultimately worthless, since man would always fall short of the divine. So reasoned the magazine.[6]

This time there was a reaction. First there was an attempt in the two main city churches to bridge the gap between choir and congregation.

St John's was the first to move. At the 1877 annual parish meeting Watson announced plans to make the musical portions of the services more accessible to the man in the pew. What exactly he proposed or accomplished is now lost although he did, at one stage, unsuccessfully recommend the adoption of the New Zealand Hymnal.[7] Twelve months later the simplifying process apparently had worked and, what was more, had received the co-operation of the choir itself.[8]

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5. C.M., Feb., 1877, pp.1-3. Response to this was once again slow, but a letter appeared in the July issue of the same magazine (p.14) supporting its stand.

6. ibid., Dec., 1877, pp.1-2

7. L.T., 12.4.1877

8. P., 2.5.1878. No details were given.

St. Michael's moved differently. Instead of the music reaching down to the people, a step which might have compromised her pro-cathedral status, the congregation was to be educated to take a fuller part in existing services. In January 1878 a Choir Guild was formed on much the same lines as the old choral classes. Its twofold functions were the training of singers for future recruitment to the main choir and "to give fundamental knowledge of music to those who though not willing to join the choir, were anxious to enter heartily into the spirit of the glorious church liturgy." With an initial membership of seventy, they met each week in the schoolroom where Stansell taught them unaccompanied singing on Curwen's tonic solfa.[9]

But the critics were not silenced. Four months after the classes had begun, a minority, still dissatisfied at the dominance of the choir in church affairs, fought for a reduction in musical expenses to one hundred pounds per annum. However other parishioners heavily defeated this move.[10]

Both curtailment on music in the ordinary services at St. John's and the continuation of existing practices at St. Michael's resulted in the choirs' role expanding into the domain of the choral societies. It was a process which not merely stressed externals to their utmost but actually went beyond them. Before these externals

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9. L.T., 15.11.1878

10. ibid., 30.4.1878. Two years previously expenses had reached £156. ibid., 13.4.1875

were connected with the church fabric; now they were wholly secularised and the choir came to exist for its own sake. We may see this as an inevitable conclusion of all that the 'seventies had worked towards. But as the aims under which the choirs originally developed - to provide either a lead for the congregation or a devotional atmosphere for the silent worshipper - were forgotten, these years also take on an element of decay. Decadence in the sense European art of the late nineteenth century is known, is perhaps too strong a term yet these years are undoubtedly cut off from the last twenty by a feeling of over-ripeness. They belong to the past; the 'eighties and 'nineties essentially to the future.

To return then to the churches. The decisions which had been taken did not effect the major religious festivals and excerpts from Messiah continued at Easter and Christmas in both St. John's and St. Michael's. But the latter inevitably saw the greatest changes. Just as Barnby had done at St. Anne's, Soho, Parker introduced instruments into the service for the first time on Christmas Eve 1877 when a clarionet and cornet accompanied him at the organ in the "Pastoral Symphony".[11] This was also the year when Christchurch first heard selections from Bach's Matthew Passion. They were first performed at St. Michael's on Good Friday afternoon.

> The service opened with one or more of the sentences at the commencement of Evening Prayer , said by the minister,

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11. P., 26.12.1877

> the Rev E.G.Penny, after which the 51st psalm was chanted by the minister and people. Then after a brief address by Mr Penny, the Passion music began. The selections consisted of five parts: The Passover, Olivet, Gethsemane, The Judgment Hall, The Cross.... In the interval between two of the parts, an address was delivered by the Primate. It is to be regretted that the parts were not stonger, but apart from this defect, the music was well rendered, especially considering it was a first attempt, and the whole service was exceedingly solemn and impressive. Mr Neville Barnett played the organ and Mr R. Parker took the part of the precentor.[12]

If the following year's selection is any guide none of the choruses were given. Instead Parker concentrated on the main narrative, the interspersed chorales and two arias, "Grief for sin" and "Break in grief". Bach's Fugue in e minor served as the concluding voluntary.[13] The church authorities hoped a larger congregation would be attracted in future years.

> We trust that similar services, which have found favour with many church people at home, will help to redeem some of our holy days from neglect and desecration.[14]

Such important occasions provided one means of giving musical rewards to the choir. The other lay through branching out into longer works performed either at parish functions or in complete independence of the church.

In June 1878 a twenty-one strong St. Michael's

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12. NZCN, May, 1877, p.87
13. P., 20.4.1878
14. NZCN, May, 1878, p.75

Choral Society, originating perhaps from the Choir Guild began its two year existence by rendering Mendelssohn's Athalie and Sterndale Bennett's The May Queen, the former to piano and harmonium accompaniment, the latter led by a small band under C.F.Bunz, Parker conducting.[15] Other cantatas followed at regular intervals: J.F.Barnett's Paradise and the Peri,[16] Barnby's Rebekah under Palairet,[17] Costa's Naaman,[18] Spohr's The Christian's Prayer[19] and Sterndale Bennett's The Woman of Samaria,[20] the last two under Henry Wells.

The St. John's Harmonic Society, a parallel development, was also formed in 1878[21] but gave no public concerts until Landergan took up his post at the church a year later. Its life was brief and after performing only four works[22] it collapsed in April 1881, Barnett vowed it was the victim of the "current fashionable craze for the 'advancement of art,'" a phenomena which rashly induced musical amateurs "to come forward unaware of the hard work involved and then fall back."[23] However true this

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15. L.T., 27.6.1878

16. ibid., 10.10.1878. Soloists Misses Harris, Parkerson, Mrs.Townend and Messrs Appleby, Walker and Willes; concert repeated, see ibid., 8.11.1878

17. ibid., 25.2.1879. R.T.Searell (piano), A.J. Merton (harmonium)

18. ibid., 28.9.1879

19. ibid., 28.1.1880

20. ibid., 5.7.1880

21. ibid., 22.7.1878

22. Haydn, Mass in B flat (ibid., 18.6.1879), Romberg, Lay of the Bell (ibid., 21.11.1879), Messiah at Christmas 1879 and St. Paul (ibid., 1.12.1880)

23. ibid., 18.4.1881

may have been, a more direct cause, and one that contributed to the sudden downfall of independent enthusiasm of the parish choirs, was the pull of the cathedral choir then being formed. The preparations involved in this usher in the final period of church music in the nineteenth century.

One final point must be made, for the adverse comments discussed above have centered solely on the issue of cathedral versus congregational services. A more personal viewpoint may be taken. There is evidence that Parker's health was worsening, a condition not alleviated by the amount of work then passing through his hands.[24] Both cause and result of this aggravation would account for the various criticisms of St. Michael's choir behaviour from 1875 onwards. One visitor accused the choristers of treating worship "exclusively as their own",[25] another dislike the "dull chants that the congregation find impossible to join in."[26] Then there are the luke-warm comments of the Matthew Passion performances of 1877 further dampened by a church only half full. In 1878 a further editorial in the Lyttelton Times called for instruction to be given to choir singers, especially those in the city.[27] Just before Parker relinquished his position, W.H.Willes, an experienced chorister from Peterborough, thought the music of the ordinary services "slipshod". Neither

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24. In 1878 he was forced to spend some time in Nelson in complete rest from professional duties - see Atkinson, op.cit., p.3

25. NZCN, Nov., 1875, p.17

26. L.T., 27.3.1876

27. ibid., 17.1.1878

choir nor choirmaster were "competent", he said, and no improvement could be expected while their heart was not in their work.[28] One may say that the criticisms resulted from a reduction of the musical content in the services, that smaller opportunities led directly to slackness and apathy. This may have been the case at St. John's where Landergan presided but St. Michael's services did not regress until 1881.

Any survey of the period must start with two factors: the leadership of Parker and the commercial expansion brought on by Vogel's schemes. The growth of choirs was merely one aspect of the remarkable social flowering in all fields during these years. But the end reveals another characteristic of this growth. We said before that the 'seventies remained tied to the past; indeed the decade's maturity can be questioned for when Parker left to become organist and choirmaster of Wellington Cathedral in October 1878[29] and the land boom collapsed in January of the following year, the steam went out of their efforts. Left to themselves they were almost as helpless as before.

It is true that disintegration did not suddenly happen for the elaborate organisation still rolled on of its own momentum. But if one cannot, with any degree of certainty, give direct evidence, by late 1879 there are some distinct pointers. There is the increasing secularism of choir activities

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28. NZCN, May, 1878, p.82
29. L.T., 16.9.1878

which was essentially foreign to Parker's conception, the declining public interest in the choral services, even momentarily at the major festivals, and finally there is the personal glimpse of musical conditions at St. Michael's by the wife of the incumbent. The feeling of an interim period, one almost pathetic when we consider past years, is clearly depicted in Alice Penny's letter to Robert Parker.

> We are expecting a gentleman from Home /Henry Wells/ to take our place here; the Harmonium may be here any day, so I earnestly trust relief may be soon at hand. We had a good evening service last Tuesday /the opening of Synod/; Mr Barnett played and Mr Palairet conducted - at least he walked about during the service dealing out services (Bunnett) and anthems....[30]

Even if prosperity had remained, the outcome would surely have been different from the 'seventies. The unique character of the decade - a transitional one combining the family atmoshpere of settlement days with the resources of the country as a whole - had gone with the abolition of the provinces in 1876. At the same time, overseas developments in taste and fashion came closer to the country and newspapers reflected a more cosmopolitan outlook. Despite a bleakness then, it is here that first signs of maturity come, and again, just as we saw in 1870, there would be a rejection of the past.

Perhaps this rejection had already come. Certainly we saw a reaction against elaborate services, or, to be more particular, against the

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30. Letter to Robert Parker from Alice Penny, November 24, 1879, A.T.L. 211/23

inability of choirs to reach acceptable standards, as early as 1875. But then if prosperity had continued into the era of the cathedral, that, and the institution of the choir school may well have provided a scapegoat since even the severest critics were not against highly developed choral services where they had won a place through tradition. In England reform was once more restoring the diocesan's centre to its ancient heritage. In Christchurch a strong and financially secure cathedral could have clarified the distinctive functions of a parish church and worked to the betterment of both.

And what of Parker? He left and with him went a leadership that perhaps because of its youth had burnt itself out too quickly. A mild form of decadence had already engulfed St. Michael's while he was there and for him to stay in the same place and still arouse fresh inspiration would have been well nigh impossible. It therefore remained for new men with different backgrounds and different outlooks to exert their influence. Wells and Tendall could have given this life boood but as the next chapter will show, their efforts were strangled from the start.

PART III

Conclusion

Diocesan Feeling in the Depression

Cathedral, D.C.A.

1880 - 1900

> The years that followed on from that double disillusionment /the collapse of religious and political idealism around 1870/ were like one long afternoon in a rich man's house on a rainy day. It was not that everybody believed that nothing would happen; it was also that everybody believed that anything happening was even duller than nothing happening.
>
> G.K.Chesterton, The Victorian Age in Literature (1913)

To Chesterton this mood of despondency, with its consequent drift to and fro, characterised the literary scene of late-Victorian England. He argued that during the 1880s people, particularly those who were products of the new mass educational drive over the past half century, succumbed to pressures which effectively destroyed established ideas held for generations. Prussian military and industrial might squashed the romantic ideals of 1789 France while the popularising and inevitable distortion of Darwin's evolutionary theories put paid to a conservative and literalist Christianity, one largely based on the rationalistic accretions of the eighteenth century.

In Christchurch Chesterton would have noted a similar atmosphere brought on by the same double disillusionment. Only it was no rich mansion. From the political and economic aspects the first signs of impending change had come in the mid-'seventies: the defeat of Vogel and the internal

tremors shaking an unparalleled prosperity. January 1879 saw the abrupt descent to a long depression, one lasting for the next twelve years and then lifting only slowly.

Local religion was also bankrupt, at least many looked on it as such, and its accusers pointed the long finger particularly at the establishment - the Anglican church. Its respectability, its aloofness from growing social problems and above all its failure to answer satisfactorily the growing skeptical climate gave cause for rebuke. By 1890 religion had sunk to the level of a participatory sport as crowds gathered to hear the verbal battles between clergy and Rationalists. It was a diversion and the futility of the arguments resulted only in heated emotions followed within a week by a simmering return to the status quo.

To say that church music became involved in all this would be too strong; rather it was becalmed. Parker may not have counted the 'seventies a complete success but at least the choirs saw a goal they were keen to reach. Avid debate over the respective merits of the choral service - theological, musical and practical - had taken place and choirs, thus encouraged, developed in an unprecedented manner. Overall and in spite of set backs there was a sense of moving purposefully forward. Now these goals had vanished. With the cathedral finally in use by 1881 and the revival of the D.C.A. two years later, a vacuum was created in the imaginative hopes of the people. There was no development, no debates, and the relationship between choir and congregation remained static. Both were bored because they had no tangible target.

A sense of bewilderment hovered over Christchurch as provincial town expanded into impersonal city. No longer it seemed could neighbours be approached on the same intimate terms as before and the constant shift of population not only within New Zealand but across the Tasman and even to England served to alienate and frustrate social cohesion. Further, one's own political destiny lay not in the hands of familiar men governing in Christchurch but with a national parliament in Wellington. Though much nearer than in the past, the capital seemed remote and at times frustratingly disinterested in local affairs. In compensation the town offered little; the idea of a garden city was still a future dream.

Increasing population meant that news of local affairs was more keenly sifted before publication in the dailies. Church music early suffered a comparative anonymity. Where before, a dedication anniversary, a choral service or even an introduction of new choir robes would receive a full paragraph, a sentence now served and from the mid-'eighties this was reduced still further to a cursory and incomplete list of music sung at major festivals in the larger churches. With parish magazines not yet in general production, the skimping of choral details spread even to the diocesan Church News. Matters of choir organisation drop out of public interest as overseas news and advertisements encroach. By the 'ninties the Lyttelton Times and Press assume an increasingly modern tone.

There were only two partial exceptions to this general trend: the Cathedral and the D.C.A. In one sense the very prominence of the Cathedral condemned the parishes to a backwater for its services and music were much brighter and of a higher standard, and all seats were free; city churches and Merivale all noted drastic falls in congregational levels.[1] But this success was still only a partial exception since even these two diocesan organisations failed to maintain their original promise after ten years. Despite odd moments of glory, the familiar coolness of ultimate futility is apparent.

The Cathedral

Whether for administrative reasons or because they served a more secular purpose than parish churches, English cathedrals were the last to see the effects of the nineteenth-century reforms. Indeed, even thirty years after the well-publicised efforts of Helmore and Jebb in the parochial sphere and the 1849 blast from Wesley,[2] no sign of comparable improvements could be found. Not until 1872 when John Stainer was appointed to St. Paul's in London did permanent change come. There he instituted choir rehearsals, doubled the number of singers and worked on a new school for the boy choristers. By increasing both salaries

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1. L.T., 18.4.1882; 21.4.1882; 25.4.1882; 26.4.1882

2. "Music, as it is now performed in our Cathedrals, when compared with well-regulated performances elsewhere, bears to them about the proportion of life and order which an expiring rush-light does to a summer's sun." Wesley, op.cit., p.12 (see above, p.11)

Plate 27: Cathedral organ in north transept c. 1900

Plate 28: Some original members of the Cathedral Choir. A.J.Merton in back row, 4th from left (with beard)

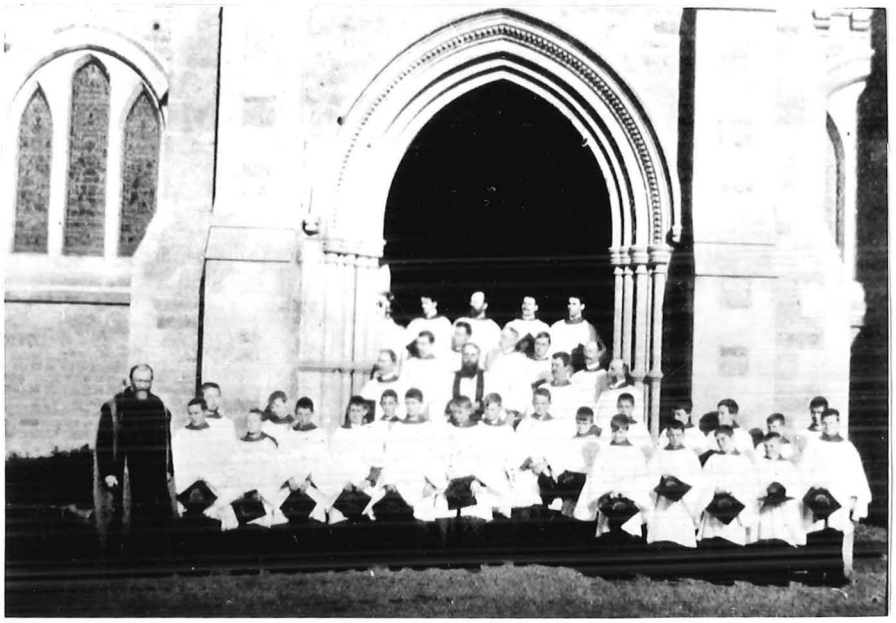

Plate 29: Cathedral Choir in 1889; Rev Walter Dunkley, precentor, in centre

and fines he hoped to attract a better class of person to the adult ranks.[3]

As his own reputation spread he enlarged his horizons. In February 1880 he called a meeting of nineteen cathedral organists to discuss reform. Under his chairmanship they all agreed that choirs should have no less than twenty boys and twelve men, that the boys should be boarded at an attached school and that an organist's salary be high enough to preclude him from earning an outside living.[4]

Money was not the real problem. More often Stainer had to fight reactionary Chapters and clergy who held ultimate power. In every case progress was slow: Salisbury still had three men and seven bows on each side of the chancel in 1884. But in Christchurch lack of funds hampered efforts to improve the music and invariably caused dissension and bitterness on both sides. Nevertheless we must see that the musical arrangements made here were initiated under the general inspiration of contemporary English cathedral reform.

There were two aims for services in the new cathedral: first that an all male choir should render daily choral services both morning and night whether a congregation attended or not, and second, that nothing should be sacrificed in order to attain exemplary standards of conduct and music for the rest of the diocese. Cathedral worship was the vicariously offered up praise of the whole people

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3. Rainbow, op.cit., pp.288 - 289
4. Chadwick, op.cit., II, p.374

at a cost of time, money and effort that no parish could afford nor should even desire. This was developed during the octave of services after the consecration when the Bishop of Dunedin preached on "The Office of the Cathedral as exhibiting the highest attainable type of divine worship."[5]

Six months earlier, at the Easter parish meeting, the Rev. E.G.Penny had spoken of the changing role of St. Michael's. For some years the church had been the pro-cathedral; this would now cease and he thought the change would necessitate a modified service, one simpler and more congregational in character.[6]

For the post of precentor, the Chapter approved the Rev. W.H.Elton from Rakaia, a man possessing high qualifications in musical knowledge and organising ability.[7] Ordained in London in 1870, his postings there enabled him to gain first hand experience of the music at All Saints, Margaret Street and St. Andrew's, Wells Street where Barnby played.[8] In 1876 he arrived in Canterbury and Harper placed him first at Kaiapoi (just after Carlyon's dismissal) and then as vicar to the West Coast (1877 - 79). While over there we are told he created a surpliced choir and improved the services. As precentor to the cathedral his job entailed the intoning of daily offices, supervising

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5. NZCN, Oct., 1881, p.582
6. L.T., 26.4.1881,
7. McKenzie, op.cit., p.70
8. NZCN, April, 1884, p.71
9. MacDonald Canterbury Biographies in the Canterbury Museum.

the non-choral activities of the choristers and discipline in general as well as administering and teaching in the Cathedral School. For the next six years the latter proved a full-time occupation.

The problem centred around fitting a school curriculum into a busy cathedral schedule. Not counting the normal Sunday services, both men and boys were required to sing twice daily - including Saturdays.[10] Two morning practices of just under an hour each were held for the boys. For the men, a Wednesday night rehearsal from seven-thirty to nine sufficed at which it seems likely that the boys - at least the senior ones - were also present.[11] Not till February 1884, when the Friday afternoon services for men's voices only enabled them to have a half holiday, was the trebles' load lightened.[12]

A special school was therefore of prime importance. To Stainer it symbolically restored the cathedral's ancient heritage as a seat of learning. To Christchurch it presented in the face of a heavy programme and still difficult travelling conditions the only viable means of maintaining a cathedral choir.

The school opened on 16 March 1881 in an almost ideal situation. Though a good fifteen

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10. McKenzie, op.cit., pp.77-78; NZCN, April, 1881, p.485

11. Minutes of the Cathedral Chapter, 1.3.1884; 24.6.1884

12. NZCN, March, 1884, p.43. Special settings were imported from England for double choir: an alto, two tenors and two basses on either side. L.T., 1.3.1884

minutes walk away from the Square, it was placed in the "highest and healthiest part of Christchurch."[13] To the west flowed the Avon and beyond that the large expanse of an as yet undeveloped Hagley Park. The school comprised two main buildings. The headmaster's house on the corner of Chester Street and Park Terrace was the property of Elton while a single classroom served for the fifty-five boys who attended in the first year. Clearly then, non-choristers were taught there from the beginning, some perhaps taking advantage of the limited boarding facilities Elton provided in his home.[14]

The staff totalled three. Elton took divinity and the classics - Latin and Greek - while Henry George Merton and his younger brother Arthur, gave lessons in geography, history, mathematics, writing and singing.[15]

As in all previous attempts to start a cathedral choir (at the pro-cathedral in 1863 and 1873), scholarships offered free tuition. The Saturday prior to the school opening, Wells selected twenty-four boys from among the forty applicants, half of whom had previously been members of parish choirs. Others who showed promise qualified as probationers[16] and were awarded

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13. NZEN, June, 1884, p.106

14. ibid., Feb., 1881, p.464

15. G.H.Merton, son of Charles, had started up an independent school on the same lines at St. Michael's the year before. According to his advertisement, "particular attention /was/ given to Vocal Music in view of the establishment of the Cathedral School." ibid., June 1880, p.324

16. ibid., June, 1881, pp.5-6

an education at half cost. The benefits did not end there. Arrangements were made for the more promising and deserving choristers to receive exhibitions to Christ's College when their voices broke around what would seem to us the late age of fourteen and fifteen. Here they would be trained for some profession

> or if the bent of their mind is towards the ministry of the Church they will be eligible for scholarships to the /Upper Department/ which will help them on till the time of ordination; so that boys who are fortunate enough to enter the choir may obtain the whole of their education at a very small cost.[17]

This same article revealed that within two years from the scheme's inception, a growing reputation had resulted in choristers coming from as far afield as Auckland and Otago.

A choirboy's life was a busy one and to Elton's credit he did all he could to lighten the load, often at great personal risk. He established a recreation fund, financed mainly out of his own pocket but also from Christmas Eve and Easter Eve offertories.[18] With this money summer outings to Lyttelton and the bays were arranged, trips that were later superseded by rowing (they had their own costumes, boat and boathouse) and reading from a newly formed choir library in the winter months.[19] Then in the 1882 - 1883 Christmas holidays came a concert tour to Dunedin where the boys won "golden"

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17. ibid., June, 1884, p.106
18. ibid., March, 1883, p.44; L.T., 23.12.1881
19. NZCN, Jan., 1882, p.12

acclaim "both for their high musical qualifications and for their excellent behaviour and gentlemanly manners."[20] But by this time a large hole had been cut in Elton's pocket and he was forced to recoup some of the losses with a choir concert in Christchurch early that February. Here Wells introduced some Elizabethan madrigals - "quaint old numbers" thought the newspaper.[21]

However, if Elton's work among the boys and the adult lay clerks earned unstinted praise from the Cathedral authorities, his administrative verve at the school proved controversial. Unable or unwilling to wait for official approval from the governing body - the Chapter - he would launch schemes from his private funds and then appeal for assistance. Ever impatient to improve the welfare of the boys, he seemed to have an optimistic cheerfulness over spending money in what, after all, was supposed to be a depression.

At first boarding for the choristers was not compulsory and since most came from the parishes of St. Michael's and St. John's, few found the travelling distance an intolerable burden. But as the summer rolled on to autumn and the colder damper weather set in, Elton realised that for the health of the boys, other arrangements were imperative. Consequently during the winter of 1881 he provided hot lunches at his home, turning to the Chapter when he could no longer absorb the cost. These underhand tactics compelling them to fork out extra money were not popular but they too were

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20. L.T., 31.1.1883

21. ibid., 7.2.1883. A full review is given.

aware that something had to be done.

By March 1882 a committee was formed to decide whether to build permanent boarding accomodation or to "modify the services".[22] Delaying procedures like this however, rubbed against Elton's grain and in May he ordered construction to start. Mountfort's drawings included a large dining room, master's room and dormitories, all connected to the precentor's house by a cloister.[23] Until their new quarters were ready the boys lived with Elton.[24] The Chapter now disclaimed all responsibility[25] but by appealing to the public, Elton surprisingly raised £800, an amount more than sufficient, and the new buildings were opened on the 24 August, 1882. Two years later, accomodation for yet another sixteen boys was added together with a much needed gymnasium.

Between this date (1884) and 1887 the financial dealings of Elton are hard to follow. Through the ministrations of "gentlemen interested in the school", two adjoining sections of land were bought as a playground,[26] and it is possible that this syndicate's transactions were alarming a more cautious and ultimately responsible Chapter. Once already Elton had walked the tightrope. Now, finding that certain "financial accusations" against him could not be disproved, he was forced

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22. Chapter Minutes, 30.3.1882
23. NZCN, June, 1882, p.103
24. L.T., 5.6.1882
25. NZCN, July, 1882, p.125
26. ibid., June, 1884, p.106

to resign at the end of 1887.[27] The Church brought his house and George Merton became headmaster with results that will be seen later. (see below p. 197)

Meanwhile the choir itself had not experienced a happy six years. From a promising start the realities of a vastly different, more secularised world were forced upon all concerned with its administration, until a level was reached where for four months the cathedral was officially without precentor or organist.[28] Morning weekday choral services had already been dropped in 1888 through lack of funds.[29] Yet teething troubles arose long before that; indeed they started with the choir's genesis.

The Cathedral Chapter appointed Henry Wells first organist[30] and immediately St. Michael's were up in arms. It is easy to see why; after all they had paid his passage out from England less than a year before and in fairness expected some service in return, or at least financial compensation.[31] But the Chapter, though perhaps morally obliged to pay out, let the matter rest and for a time, relations between the two churches were extremely sour. The grievances of the parish did not end here, for the out-going Wells took most of the choir with him. As William Izard wrote to Parker, "It can't be helped. Wells is so energetic

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27. Letter from W.H.Elton to Chapter, 30.12.1887

28. Letters from Chapter to Rev. W.Dunkley and G.F.Tendall, 28.8.1889; 16.10.1889

29. Chapter Minutes, 23.1.1888

30. ibid., 7.12.1880 31. ibid., 24.12.1880

that there is some pleasure working under him."[32]

By all accounts Wells had a flair for choral training[33] and it was at this the Cathedral authorities looked when they chose him. But in his desire to do the best for the choir, the combined limitations of a depression and a colony in the midst of a radical transformation brought out unforeseen qualities. Aristocratic in taste, aloof when challenged and at times giving way to an unpredictable temper, he caused estrangement between both his superiors and members of the choir, some of whom refused to regard him as anything else but an equal. To Wells this was impudence. An ounce of tact on his part would at least have ameliorated many tight situations. Instead he found that when antagonised, his opponents could be as obstinately adamant.

Almost three months after the boys' training had begun, the adult lay clerks were chosen: six paid members who would be aided at the Sunday services by volunteers.[34] All were compelled to submit to rules and could be discharged on three months notice for infringement, a system purposely designed to prevent abuses which had developed in England where cathedral choirmen were still often chosen for life.[35]

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32. Letter, 15.8.1881, A.T.L., 211/28

33. Under him the Motett Society managed local first performances of Beethoven's Missa Solemnis (1887) and Bach's Magnificat (1888), the former accompanied by five strings, piano and harmonium.

34. NZCN, July, 1881, p.532. The professionals were: J.F.McCardell, James MacKintosh (altos), F.S.Funston, -.Hartley (tenors), Charles and Arthur Merton (basses). Izard and Appleby were among the volunteers.

35. "News /1901/ was received of the death of Mr Charles Lockey who was admitted to the vicars-

Wells' first altercation with the authorities started not long afterwards. Persevering through two rejections, leave of absence for a six month stay in England was finally granted him in April 1882. The arrangements were that a deputy, a Mr Cambridge should play at the services while Tendall, then organist at St. Michael's, would superintend his rehearsals with the choir.[36] These were precautionary means for despite Wells' advocacy, Cambridge's "very slight" testamonials caused the Dean some anxiety - Tendall's presence seemed a genuine safeguard.[37] By October, after only one month, the worst fears were realised: Cambridge could not manage the situation and a letter was despatched to Auckland asking Wells to return before Christmas.[38] No reply came and in November, Elton dashed off a note in consternation to the Dean.

> The men cannot sing to the accompaniments and are in consequence in a state of rebellion, & the services are rapidly becoming a disgrace to the cathedral. It is most important that some decisive step should be taken at once otherwise the choir must shortly collapse. Under all circumstances I should recommend, that, as the present engagement of the Chapter with the lay clerks terminates at the end of this month, they had better be re-appointed under new rules from the first of next month.
>
> But as the present dissatisfaction arises from the incompetency of the organist, it can hardly be set at rest until adequate provision is made for the accompaniment of the services.[39]

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choral in 1844 but owing to the loss of his voice has been represented by deputy since 1859." Minutes of St. Paul's Cathedral Chapter (London), 1901 in Chadwick, op.cit., II, p.376

36. Minutes of Cathedral Chapter, 18.8.1882

37. ibid., 9.8.1882 38. ibid., 5.10.1882

Though powerless at rehearsals, Tendall also complained about disobedience from two lay clerks and suggested that one be removed.

Meanwhile Wells had replied that it was impossible for him to return before Christmas.[40] The Cathedral was left with no alternative but to issue an ultimatum:

> Choir terrible - something must be done at once - the Chapter will agree to your resignation reply paid.[41]

It worked, and a month later to the day, Wells said he would take over for the Christmas services.[42] An uneasy time reigned during the next two years. Money became scarcer and the number of paid clerks were cut back to four though with an increase of ten pounds a year.[43] In November C.H.H.Cook, professor of mathematics and natural philosophy, keen amateur musician and long-time member of the Chapter, sang tenor on the understanding his salary would go towards additional music.[44] Its lack he saw as a major cause of discontent among choirmen and Wells himself. This was not the first time his generosity in this direction was seen for in 1883 he bought over half the total of new music.[45]

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39. Letter fromW.H.Elton to H.Jacobs, 6.11.1882

40. Chapter minutes, 6.11.1882

41. Telegram dated 7.11.1882

42. Chapter minutes, 7.12.1882

43. ibid., 15.2.1883 44. ibid., 19.11.1883

45. Letter from C.H.H.Cook to H.Jacobs, 6.11.1882; Chapter minutes, 7.12.1882. In the twelve months prior to February 1884, music was paid for by the following: Cook £54, Elton £2.10.6, Wells £9, Mr Cane £1.10, Anonymous £10, and proceeds from Messiah festival held in cathedral £23. ibid., 28.2.1884

Finally in March 1884 Wells gained an assistant, Davis Hunt, a later pupil of C.H.Lloyd, then organist of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.[46]

With growing antipathy towards Elton and perhaps the whole cathedral job, Wells now absented himself more and more from practices and the console. A complaint from the Dean and the formulation of new and less stringent duties[47] temporarily halted an inevitable decline, but with Hunt's own resignation sometime after July and Wells' senseless rehiring of Cambridge, the show-down could not be far away. Already the public were expressing their disappointment at the music and were reflecting on the consequent damage to cathedral finances and reputation.[48]

Matters came to a head the last Sunday in February when choirmen refused to go into the cathedral unless the service setting was changed. They appealed to Elton, who, agreeing that Cambridge's playing would court disaster, replaced it with a simpler a cappella one. Wells, in spite of a contractual clause demanding his presence, was away. The next Wednesday he turned his full wrath on them. Preluding what should have been a practice he stood in front of their stalls, read a declaration demanding either an apology or resignation from those concerned and then stalked off.

On the 5 March both Wells and Elton gave their version of the incident to the Chapter, followed

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46. NZCN, March, 1884, p.42
47. Chapter minutes, 4.4.1884; 23.4.1884; 24.6.1884
48. NZCN, Sept., 1883, p.169

two days afterwards by a further list of complaints from the organist. Whatever the outcome, Wells would not resign. The Chapter however thought differently and three days later Tendall accepted their offer to assume control.[49] With an annual loss of over £400 the cathedral could ill-afford to let its main source for drawing congregations run down. Elton's report blamed Wells for the choir's condition and there seems little reason to doubt his objective findings.

> I have from time to time received complaints both from the Lay Clerks and members of the Voluntary Choir about Mr Wells' treatment of them and several of the latter have resigned in consequence. As to the general state of the Choir I feel bound to report that it is most unsatisfactory and the deterioration has been going on for a year or so. The men are not sufficiently rehearsed - the sole weekly practice rarely exceeds one hour and the Lay Clerks never receive an extra practice. The boys, I find, receive no instruction in the rudiments of music and Mr Wells informs me that he has not time to teach them. Most of the elder boys who were, at the outset, taught the rudiments of music have now left and in consequence the present boys sing almost entirely by ear, and it is impossible to carry on a Cathedral Service creditably under such circumstances. The rudiments of music should undoubtedly be taught by the organist and choirmaster and if the boys were always practiced the full time, opportunities could be found for teaching them so much as to enable them to read music. Unless the boys receive such instruction it is absolutely impossible for them either to sing steadily in chorus or to sing solos and other important parts of the service with confidence. At the present time there is not a single solo boy left in the choir.[50]

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49. Letter from Chapter to G.F.Tendall, 10.3.1885
50. Letter from W.H.Elton to Chapter, 5.3.1885

Like Tendall, the choir between 1885 and 1901 maintained an evenly sober if unspectacular course. The quarrels and tensions which had marred earlier times were replaced by a concerted effort to uphold the dignity of the cathedral's services. Yet Tendall was sadly aware that the original ideals had become eroded. In a tantalizingly brief collection of notes, undated but surely written in the late 'nineties, he pleaded to Knowles that before any criticism of the boys' singing was made, account of conditions under which they work be accepted.

Under Elton a "perfect organisation" had emerged, he said. The boys coming forward were of a "good class" and all facets of their education were cared for. Physical health, recreation, study and incentives assumed their rightful proportions. As all choristers soon boarded at the school, training and discipline could easily be maintained. Further, links were established between cathedral and school through staff connections. Though neither Wells nor he (Tendall) taught there, the choirmaster's wishes always received the full attention of the headmaster while Arthur Merton regularly escorted them to practices.

This passed into the second stage when the boarding rule was relaxed. This probably covers the years 1885 to 1889 when Tendall first took over. According to him a "splendid lot of boys" were competing for places, some of whom came from the school itself.

The third stage occured gradually as the results of Elton's departure were felt. Excellent

a teacher and administrator as George Merton may have been, when he became headmaster the school ceased to be a "feeder for the choir" and the choristers prizes stopped. In short, Elton's place was not taken by anyone and when Arthur Merton found a job at the Boys' High School,[51] the last links between cathedral and school fell away.

The Parishes and the D.C.A.

Little need now be said about the parishes having accepted the dominating role of the cathedral for nearly all choirs and congregations within the immediate vicinity suffered initially and they followed it in the general run down of the 'eighties. The last twenty years of the century saw the slow poverty-stricken birth of the modern era from which a pattern that would last well into the 1950s - and indeed, still operates in some churches today - emerged. From now on, parochial choirs worked in the shadow of the cathedral.

Similarly, the limitations they encountered were those of the depression - lack of funds, an unstable choir complement and, because Christchurch itself was being transformed from merely a provincial centre into a light industrial town,[52] a change in the character of the parishes..

St. John's, Latimer Square suffered most for it was in the midst of this change. By 1884 its choir was so fragmented that it was unable to

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51. Letter from A.Merton to Chapter, 7.7.1888
52. See Gardner, op.cit., II, pp.204-205

Plate 30: Choir of St. Mary's, Timaru in the 1890s. Thomas Gooch, choirmaster from 1878 to 1911, 2nd row from front, 4th from left.

A Choral Service at Timaru in 1879

"The service /confirmation/ was choral, as usual at St. Mary's, being taken on F in monotone, with musical accompaniment to the versicles, creeds etc. which was excellently rendered by Mr Gooch, the organist. The singing was very noticable for its precision and spirit, and for the heartiness with which it was taken up by the congregation. Under Mr Gooch's training, who is ably assisted by Mr Stephens as precentor, the choir has become perhaps second to none in the diocese. It is somewhat deficient in bass voices but in other respects it is very strong, numbering 22 boys, 12 men and 9 ladies, who occupy the front seats in the body of the church. As a rule, nothing elaborate in the way of anthems or services is attempted, except on very special occasions, so as to mark the great festivals of the church, but every attention is given to the chanting and hymns, and other portions of the service which are musically rendered, so as to ensure as far as possible, a service of worship and praise such as all can take part in."

NZCN, November, 1879, p.187

participate in that year's D.C.A. festival; its organ, once the pride of Christchurch, was sadly in need of repairs and when Arthur Towsey[53] went there in November that same year (after Cambridge) he found the condition of the music library appalling.[54] A succession of choirmasters, on the average staying little over twelve months, had only ensured this stagnation.

By comparison, Merivale and St. Michael's were strong for both choirs maintained stability in areas that underwent no radical change. After his dismissal from the cathedral, Wells returned to St. Michael's until 1901 - an uninterrupted fifteen years. At Merivale two consecutive vicars - Thomas Flavell (1879 - 1891) and C.J.Merton (1891 - 1896) - had strong musical interests and though both were forced to give up their choir-master's duties (Merton because of ill-health) each maintained a firm yet encouraging hand on its affairs. The situation was repeated at Bowen's parish of Riccarton and continued after his death in 1890. (Plates 31 and 32)

The cathedral had its impact: it enforced a dull uniformity on predominantly non-congregational parish worship. But more important, its diocesan significance, first seen when combined parish choirs sang at the last of the octave services after the consecration,[55] made necessary the re-forming of the Diocesan Choral Association.

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53. Educated at Ouseley's St. Michael's College, Tenbury. Brown and Stratton, British Musical Biography

54. St. John's Choir Minutes, 25.11.1884

55. L.T., 7.11.1881

Plate 31: Choir of St. Peter's, Riccarton, 1886

Ladies on left:

front row: Misses E. Marsh, K. Burke
2nd. row: Misses Holmes, E. Hayton, A. Dykes
3rd. row: Misses Coneys, L. Dykes, M. Hayton

Ladies on right:

Misses Sybil Maude, Gertrude Bowen, L. Hayton,
E. Pilbrow, J. Holmes, Mrs J. T. Ford,
Mrs Shand

Men, left to right:

D. Hay, H. Dykes, F. Dykes, J. Atkins,
G. E. Rowland, J. Hayton, Rev. Croasdale Bowen,
R.AA. Ballantyne, J. E. Hanson, Harold Pilbrow

Boys, left to right:

H. Pilbrow, C. Christianson, W. Atkins,
S. Southern, -. Walker, E. Hanson, E. Holmes,
J. Ford, A. Ford, A. Southern

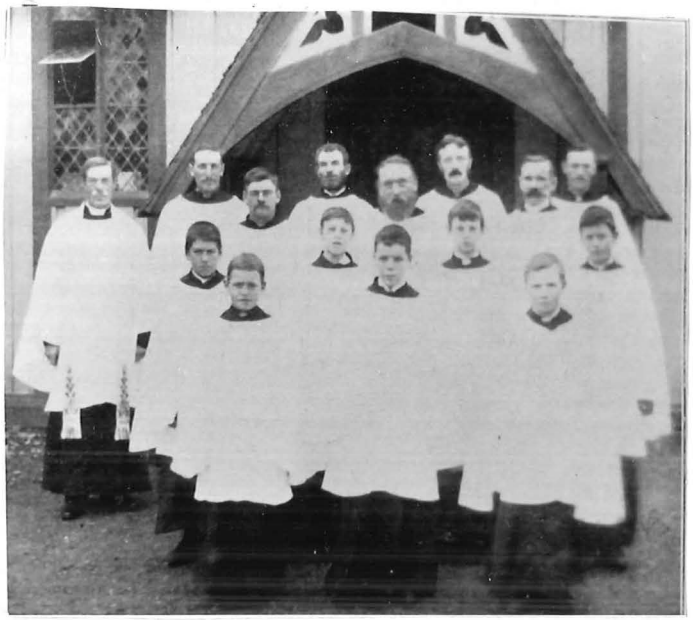

Plate 32: Choir of St. Peter's, Riccarton,
in the 1890s

Men: Rev. W. T. P. Winter, Joseph Hanson,
W. Webb, J. Atkins, G. E. Rowland,
F. Shoreland, E. Holmes

Boys: W. Brake, F. Doell, H. Clark, J. Purvis,
E. H. Clark, E. Atkins, R. Christianson

The new D.C.A. followed its predecessor by aiming at the "improvement of church music throughout the diocese",[56] but in almost every other aspect it was to be a larger, brighter and, hopefully, more successful one. As early as June 1883 preparations were under way. W.A.Willes exerted a major influence for he, with Flavell, had been involved in a similar association at Peterborough. The rules, timetable and general atmosphere refledted this.[57] All their efforts concentrated on a single annual festival to be held on an early closing day in each November. A said Communion would begin at eight in the morning, followed by full choral services at eleven and three. This arrangement allowed country people to return home the same evening.

There were two further innovations - a festival luncheon to be held in St. John's church hall and a special service book. Although Flavell thought the latter badly printed,[58] it served its purpose. By distributing the book some three months before, all choirs could thoroughly learn their music, while the pointing was taken from the Cathedral Psalter, one that would soon become standard for the next fifty years.

Publicity had been unprecedented and those people lucky enough to find a seat for the first festival on the 29 November[59] the sight was

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56. NZCN, July, 1883, p.123
57. L.T., 19.6.1883; NZCN, Aug., 1883, pp.154-155
58. ibid., Oct., 1883, p.197
59. According to the Press,many were turned away. P., 30.11.1883

impressive. Under parish banners, robed choristers led the massed choirs up the central aisle singing the opening hymn to the accompaniment of six cornets. The Cathedral choir sat in their own chancel stalls, those wearing surplices occupied a raised platform before the screen, while a third group, comprised mainly of women, had reserved seats in front of the congregation. Wells, as the Association's choirmaster, conducted from his podium halfway down the nave, Tendall played the organ and Elton intoned the prayers. To mark the occasion the Rev. E.Jervois, son of the Governor, preached at the afternoon service.

This first festival encouraged optimism; the sight of 300 singers from fourteen of the seventeen member choirs opened up new vistas. Never before had the city seen such a large massed choir.

> No one who was present...could fail to be pleased or struck with the rich and powerful volume of sound produced by so large a body of voices. /It has now been proved/ possible to collect more or less trained vocalists...and get them to sing with accuracy and intelligence, music in which they have previously received instruction. That, we think, is a most hopeful discovery to have made, and to have an important bearing upon the advancement of music in this part of the world. We cannot rest upon our oars.[60]

A successful visit earlier that year by the Dunedin Orchestral Society now moved the Lyttelton Times to suggest that the entire choral and instrumental forces of the southern provinces unite. Could they not gradually be combined

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60. L.T., 30.11.1883 - an editorial.

and moulded, the editorial asked,

> till we could hold a musical festival in Christchurch somewhat after the manner in which they are held in certain English Cathedral towns? If we could not hope for many a decade yet to emulate the grandeur of the performances in the famous "three choir" towns..., we might work on their methods.

But the flights of fancy were too idealistic. The initial promise slowly faded as the decade moved on. Between 1883 and 1887 there gradually creeps in the familiar tendency to develop too quickly at the expense of consolidation.

Music for the first festival had not been difficult as the whole occasion was of an experimental nature. Chants and hymns were confined to the familiar while the semi-chorus in the afternoon's anthem was sung by the Cathedral choir alone.[61] Next year a through setting of the service was employed but one well-worn by the city choirs.[62] The drift to elaborateness had already started and there were complaints. Wells, it seems, had neglected the country choir rehearsals, causing their members inconvenience by failing to turn up or to send his assistant.[63] Furthermore, a difficult anthem sent out from England by Wells for the 1885 Festival, emphasised an exclusiveness among town choirs.[64]

By 1887 people realised the aims of the

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61. ibid., 30.11.1883, Stainer, Sing a song of praise
62. NZCN, Dec., 1884, p.224 - setting was Dykes in F
63. L.T., 20.1.1885
64. ibid., 18.6.1885; NZCN, Jan., 1886, pp.4-5 Stainer, O clap your hands.

Association were not being fulfilled. Both H.B.Cocks from Sydenham and the Lyttelton Times complained of difficult music and imbalanced parts.[65] The volume of sound was neither so great nor so rich as one would expect from nearly four hundred singers and the music, they noted, only became spontaneous in the older and simpler chants. Cocks suggested the anthem be decided a year before, be of an easier standard and that people unfamiliar with local circumstances should not be given commissions. The overwhelming numbers of trebles caused the second major problem. Of the 391 singers, a mere 108 were left to sing the three lower parts and they suggested an evening service might solve the problem. "What we want", said Cocks, "is to be taught to sing our ordinary music and not for the purpose of a grand performance to be dragged through music we cannot really sing by the help of the Cathedral choir. I would rather the Cathedral choir, aided by other really good selected singers, sang the anthem."

Force of circumstances more than anything else granted their wishes as the depression's worst years settled on them. The Association, already seventy-seven pounds in debt,[66] failed to issue festival books over 1888 and 1889 but as the music was much simplified and came from standard sources, inconvenience was minimal - indeed, the unpretentiousness of the 1888 Festival turned out to have some merit. It succeeded in that once more it gave parish choirs an attainable goal. The

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65. L.T., 25.11.1887; 28.11.1887
66. NZCN, March, 1888, p.40

Church News rejoiced that the mother church of the diocese could produce "a service such as might with a little trouble, be rendered in most of the parish churches... it is what the Association aims at."[67] Yet the journal could not but feel depressed at the lack of pomp which a brass band had hitherto conferred, the loss of the luncheon which capped any festival season and the absence of men who generally filled out the singing. The nadir came in 1889 when choir totals reached their lowest despite a permanent change from an afternoon to an evening choral service.[68] But the biggest blow came from the absence of the cathedral's contingent for Tendall had lost faith in the Association.[69]

However with the slow financial recovery of the new decade came revived interest in the ranks of the D.C.A.[70] The new bishop's aptitude for public speaking undoubtedly aided it. (Harper had retired in 1890.) These two factors alone assured greater number for the 1890 Festival and though the music of three years previously was repeated, this and future programmes showed a definite stability that earlier times lacked. In 1896, proposals were made to start similar organisations in Timaru, Oamaru and Ashbuton.[71] Three years later, under the initiative of their vicar, the Rev. F.P.Fendall, St. John's, Rangiora played host to the first musical festival of the Choral Association of the

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67. ibid., Dec., 1888, p.187

68. L.T., 19.11.1889

69. Letter from Rev. N.A.Pascoe to the Dean, 20.9.1889. His disillusionment lasted two years.

70. L.T., 21.11.1890 71. ibid., 27.11.1896

Northern Archdeaconry. From the parishes of Kaiapoi, Woodend, Sefton, Lyethfield, Balcairn, Ohoka and Rangiora, 130 singers assembled to sing a full choral service complete with anthem.[72]

But in spirit we have already passed out of the nineteenth century. More even times were approaching which could only refine a church choir that had come of age. Without a doubt, the formative period for the choirs in Canterbury - as in nearly everything else - was the first thirty years. 1890 proved a watershed for the modern age.

Fortunately for the historian, the birth of this province in the 'fifties caught the tail end of one of the most interesting and vital periods in English church history. Debate effecting the very basis of traditional theology and worship posed real issues to a Victorian Churchman. As we have seen, the choirs were not aloof in this conflict.

In Canterbury, the cathedral-type service won for three main reasons. First, the diocese as a whole, though at no stage completely devoid of Tractarian influences, remained firmly but liberally in the Broad Church fold. Second, despite a few vituperative actions against the choral service, the majority of congregations were apathetic. In this case, the victory was by default. The third is more becoming and, on the whole, gives a truer picture. In a small community which had grown from nothing into a bustling town within thirty years, one could not escape from Progress.

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72. ibid., 27.4.1899

Signs of it were visible all around and many people had experienced the whole process since 1850. In this environment, the main efforts and failures to realise a well-trained surpliced choir was a natural corollary. They, too, were a sign of growth. Today the usual reaction is scornfully to dismiss their music; we see it not merely as different but as trivial. Yet, as this brief histor shows, their music-making activities and their ambitions in this field are not to be despised.

Appendix A

Music Inventories from Schools and Churches in the Godley Period

Extracts from Canterbury Association papers - miscellaneous papers on school matters, 1850 - 1854, in the Canterbury Museum.

Ecclesiastical and educational stores -
Brought by T.Jackson from J.W.Parker, West Strand

48 Manuals to teach singing by Hullah
16x Psalters[1] (Sop.)
16x " (Alto)
16x " (Tenor)
16x " (Bass)
for church use. Brought out by the Castle Eden.

2 Manuals
30 No. 1 exercises
30 No. 2 exercises
2 tuning forks
for school use.[2]

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Books at the Collegiate Grammar School (Lyttelton), 1851, compiled by William Holmes, teacher.

24 copies of exercises Nos 1 and 2
1 copy of Walmisley's psalms, hymns and chants
75 copies of Martin's part music, Nos 1,2, and 3

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1. Probably John Hullah's edition of Tate and Brady. Martin's chant book may also have been used at the Lyttelton church.

2. School Account, 2.3.1852

School at Gebbie's Station, December, 1852:
Hullah's Manual of Music

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Inventory of movables in /Bilton's/ School at Church belonging to Canterbury Association. /no date./

2 Daily church services - used by minister
6 Psalters divided for chanting
1 music board
224 Hullah's manual bound in cloth
18 Hullah's Psalter (6 Sop, 3 Alto, 5 Tenor, 4 Bass)
12 Chant Books
6 Warren's Psalmody Vol.1[3]
6 Choral class books
6 Select psalm tunes
5 Novello's Cathedral Choir Book (2 Sop, 1 Alto, 1 Tenor, 1 bass)
36 School part music /Martin's?/, Nos 1, 2, and 3 Services and anthems by Boyce, 1 organ copy, 3 trebles, 2 altos, 3 tenors, 1 bass
6 Appendices to Chanter's Handguide /sic/[4]
12 School songs - Hullah
24 Wilhem's Method of Singing in 2 parts[5]

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3. "Warren's Psalmody for 1 - 4 voices in score with organ accompaniment: Books 1 - 3 now ready, each containing 7 - 8 psalms and hymns - price 2d per book." adv. Musical Times, April, 1850, p.311

4. "Warren's Chanter's Hand Guide. 375 chants in 34 books - 2d each. The psalms are noted throughout - suitable for cathedral and parish choirs." ibid., May, 1850, p.327

5. Could be Hullah's Manual of Music.

6 large church hymn books
1 small church hymn book
4 Church Musician, Nos 1, 2, 3, 4
6 Christmas carols[6]

.....

Books wanted by the Akaroa school - letter to Provincial Secretary from John Watson, 4.9.1854.

59 copies of Hullah's Manual
23 copies of Hullah's School Songs
85 copies of Wilhem's Method of Singing
21 copies of select psalm tunes
2 copies of church hymn books
156 copies of Martin's Part Music
12 copies of Warren's Psalmody
21 copies of Ingram's Singing Manual

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6. Carols were first advertised in the 1850 Musical Times. They were termed "Christmas madrigals". By contemporary composers, they were not real carols at all. Helmore's Carols for Christmastide did not appear until 1853.

Appendix B
The Tune Book for the New Zealand Hymnal
1866
Preface

When the New Zealand Hymnal was first printed, the Compiler undertook the task of collecting suitable tunes for it. Having already formed the nucleus of such a collection in the shapes of a little book, which was printed at St. John's College many years ago, it was hoped that a few months would suffice for the completion of the work. The selection of the melodies was a comparatively easy matter, and with the kind assistance of the Ven. J.F.Lloyd, Archdeacon of Waitemata, was soon accomplished. When however, it came to the preparation for the press, unexpected difficulties of various kinds occurred. The labour of comparing and deciding between many different arrangements of a large number of the tunes was far greater than had been anticipated, and was much increased by the want of leisure and the constant pressure of heavy duties. Other difficulties arose in reference to the printing. At one time the work was hindered for want of a lithographic writer, and at other times for want of funds to carry on the printing. In fact, but for the help of the friend already mentioned, the book would have been still unfinished.

With reference to the tunes, it has been the aim of the Compiler to select the best he could obtain, and, in the arrangement, to adopt such harmonies as appeared to be most suitable for the use of ordinary parish choirs. With this object

in view, many English tune-books, and several German collections of chorales have been examined, and their contents freely used.

Amongst the works from which assistance has been received may be mentioned the collections of Crotch, Monk, Chope, Hullah, and Mercer; the Exeter Manual, the Bristol Tune-book and the chorales of Mendelssohn, Layriz and Filitz; the Württemburg Tune-book, and the English Chorale-book of Bennett and Goldschmidt. It would occupy too much space to enter into particulars with regard to each tune; it must therefore suffice to state that of the tunes now published, fifty are well-known tunes in ordinary use in England, thirty-three are modern English compositions, one hundred and sixteen are German chorales or Ancient Church tunes, many of which have long been naturalised in England, thirteen are Chorales or other compositions more or less altered to adapt them to the metres of the hymns to which they are set; and the remaining eight are New Zealand compositions for which the compiler is responsible. Should another edition be required, an opportunity will be afforded of indicating the particular history of each tune as far as it can be ascertained. It will be observed that the tunes, with two or three exceptions, are printed in order of their metres, beginning with the shortest and going on to the longest; the tunes of each metre being arranged alphabetically.

It remains but to express an earnest hope that the book, not withstanding its many defects, may be found useful in promoting congregational singing in our churches, and in encouraging a taste for sacred harmony amongst our people.

Note:

The following tune books were mentioned in the preface. Though evidently familiar to Purchas and perhaps to the Auckland area as a whole, no specific mention of them is heard in Canterbury.

Chope, Richard Robert, Hymn and Tune Book, 1857-1862

Crotch, William, Tunes adapted to old and new versions of the Psalms, 1807

Filitz, Friedrich, Ueber einige Interessen der älteren Kirchenmusik, Munich, Augsburg, 1853

Hullah, J.P., Whole Book of Psalms, with the canticles and hymns of the Church, for morning and evening service..., London, 1844

Layriz, Friedrich, Kern des deutschen Kirkenlieds von Luther bis auf Gellert, herausgegeben von Friedrich Layriz, Nördlingen, 1844

Appendix C
The New Zealand Hymnal
1871 Edition
A review in the
New Zealand Church News

The edition of the New Zealand Hymnal now before us is a decided improvement on the first book published; a supplement has been added, the hymns have been re-arranged, a few objectionable ones removed, the original text in some restored, and an index added, giving a list of hymns suitable for the Church Seasons and Festivals, and for special occasions. Taking it as a whole, it is very creditable as a colonial production, and in churches were the Hymnal is used, will be heartily welcomed. Had the book been issued some five years ago in its present form, it would probably, notwithstanding its many imperfections, have taken root in New Zealand; but many congregations got tired of waiting for the long-promised "new edition with tunes," and adopted other hymnals. Mercer is, we believe, generally used in the Diocese of Nelson, and Hymns Ancient and Modern in Christchurch. The great hold that the latter has taken upon the public both at home and in the colonies is surprising, for it is far from being perfect, and the arrangement of many of the tunes is of the most feeble description; but still it is undoubtedly one of the best works of the kind, and it must be a very good Hymnal indeed that will supplant it where it has been introduced and used for some time. It has been largely drawn upon by the compilers of the New Zealand Hymnal, and

about 120 out of the 307 hymns are found in its pages. The wonder is that some of the most popular and beautiful compositions in Hymns Ancient and Modern have been overlooked - e.g., No. 325, "Hark, Hark, my soul, angelic songs are singing;" No 324, "O Paradise, O Paradise;" No 212, on Holy Matrimony; No 385, "Onward British Soldiers, and very many others we could name.

The Rev. Mr. Purchas, as compiler and arranger of the tunes, has evidently taken great pains with his work; his own compositions are above mediocrity, and are likely to become favourites. We cannot but think he has made a great mistake in writing the tunes in crotchets instead of minims. It is much easier for choirs to read from the minim than the crotchet; the notes are larger, clearer and much more pleasant to read from. Another practice that we very much object to is that of giving fresh names to old standard tunes....

Some of the hymns have been so mutilated that it is somewhat difficult to recognise them again. Take "Rockingham" (156). The tune is one of the most devotional ever written, and in the minds of most Churchmen is associated with the well-known hymns, "When I survey the wondrous Cross," and, "My God, and is Thy table spread," but set in common instead of triple time, the character of the tune is quite altered.... 224, Mornington's Chant in D has surely been worn bare enough to /sic/ the Canticles without setting it to a hymn. For the benefit of those who may use the book, we point out the following errors:- 130, "S. Ann," 3rd bar, 6th note should read C in the treble....

192, "Nolingen," the bass notes are all wrong; part of the tune is in common time, triple time and half common time; put the tune into half common time (two crotchets in a bar) , it can then be sung.... 90, "Wiltshire," is arranged from an old English song, "Sally in our alley." 292, "Halleluja is a wretched attempt at setting Handel's "Harmonious Blacksmith" to raise the psalm to God all glorious." We very much dislike adaptations, and strongly object to tampering with another man's ideas, especially when that man is Handel. Germany has been drawn upon for several chorales. 4, "Hernhutt," the same that Mendelssohn introduced in "S. Paul" to "Sleepers, wake," has been set to one of the Advent hymns, "Wake, oh wake!" Few tenors, we imagine, can be found in choirs in New Zealand who can sing F sharp or G in tune....

Mr Purchas seems almost to have forgotten that such good old English writers of psalmody as Dr. Croft, Dr. Crotch, Dr. Boyce, Dr. Worgan, Orlando Gibbons, Purcell, Henry Carey, and many others ever existed. We cannot venture to predict any great success for the New Zealand Hymnal unless a revised edition is issued. Those choirs who have it in use will be glad to have the hymns and tunes in a convenient form. The need of a suitable authorised hymnal for the Church of England has long been a vexed question. At the last session of the Convocation of Canterbury (England) the subject was discussed, but nothing decided. A resolution was carried directing the Lower House of Convocation to consider the matter, and report to the Upper House. The Bishop of London and others objected to anything that might interfere with the liberty of the clergy, and thought the

selection of the hymnal should rest with the clergy. A resolution was moved in the Melbourne Church Assembly in October last [1871] for a committee to prepare a hymn-book for use in that diocese. Mr. T.T.A'Beckett, the Bishop's Registrar, opposed the motion. He said the Assembly had no more right to prescibed a hymn-book for general use than to publish a collection of sermons; and Sir W.F.Stawell, Chief Justice of Victoria, stated as his opinion that unless the use of the hymn-book were [sic] made compulsory, there would be no uniformity, as each clergyman could use the hymn-book he preferred; and if the Assembly attempte to force any particular set of hymns on the Church, he had no hesitation in saying that the laity would rise en masse against it. In the face of such expressions of opinion, we cannot but think it will be the wiser course to leave to each congregation the choice of its own hymn-book. If the New Zealand Hymnal, by the force of its own intrinsic merits, works its way, well and good, but we trust no attempt will be made to make its use compulsory on the Church of this colony.

New Zealand Church News, December, 1871, pp.37-38

Appendix D

A Simple Chant - Service

Composed for, and dedicated to,

the Incumbent and Choir

of SS. MICHAEL and ALL ANGELS,

CHRISTCHURCH

N.Z.

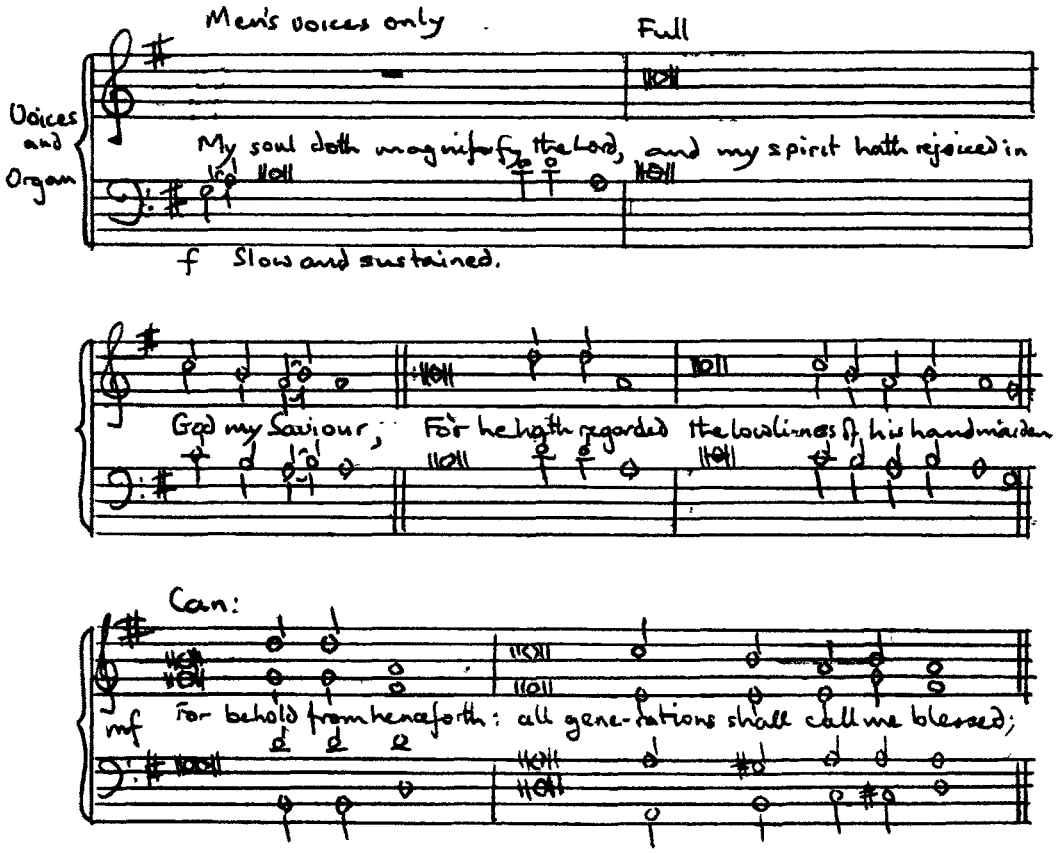
by

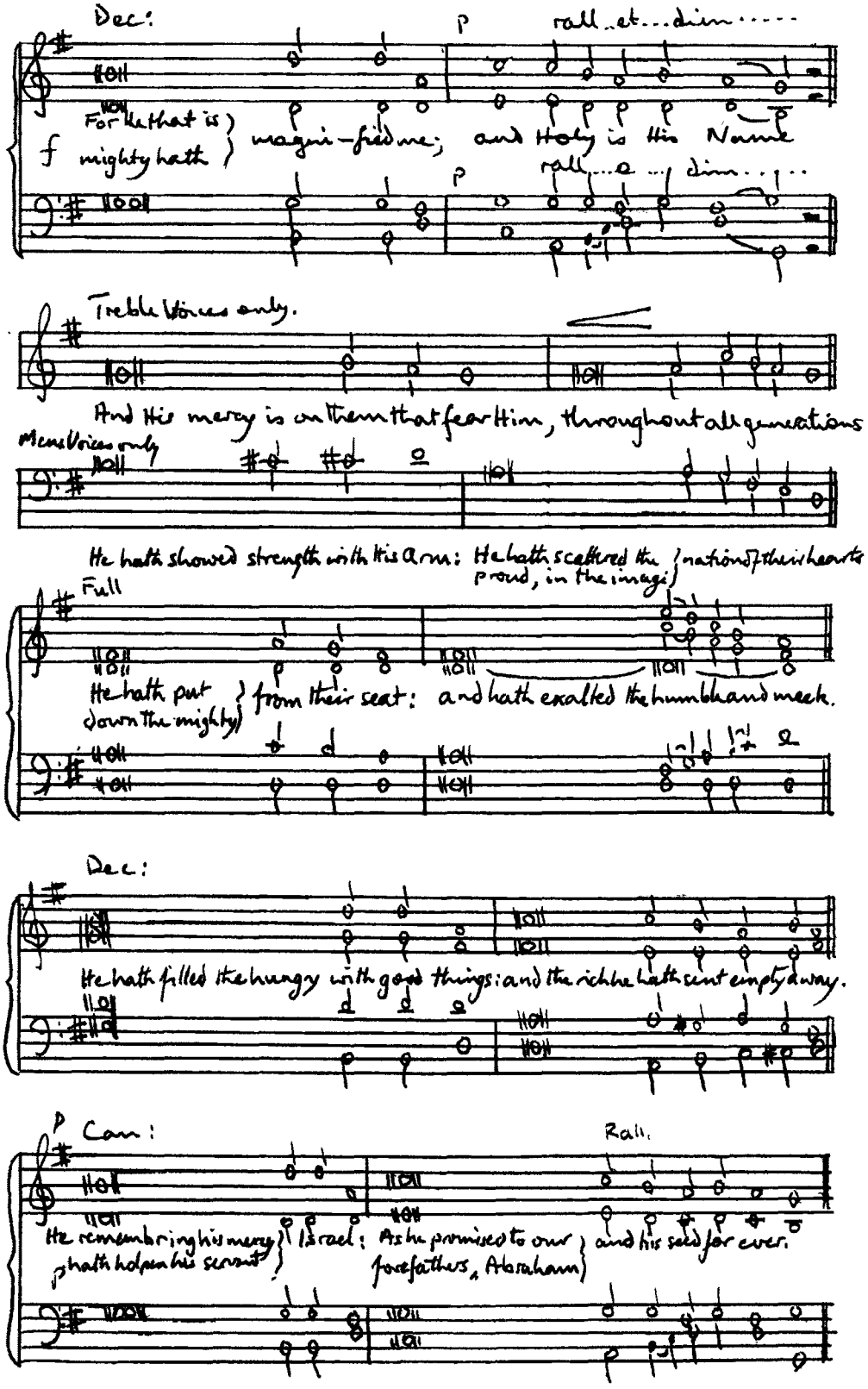
ROBERT PARKER

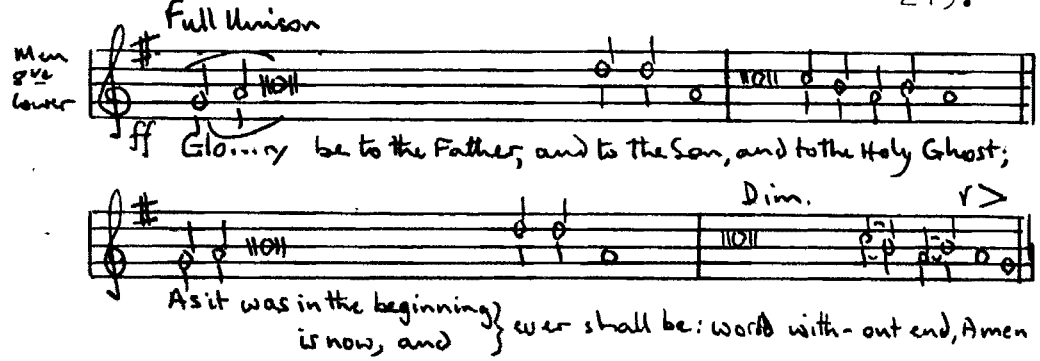
Organist and Choirmaster

1876

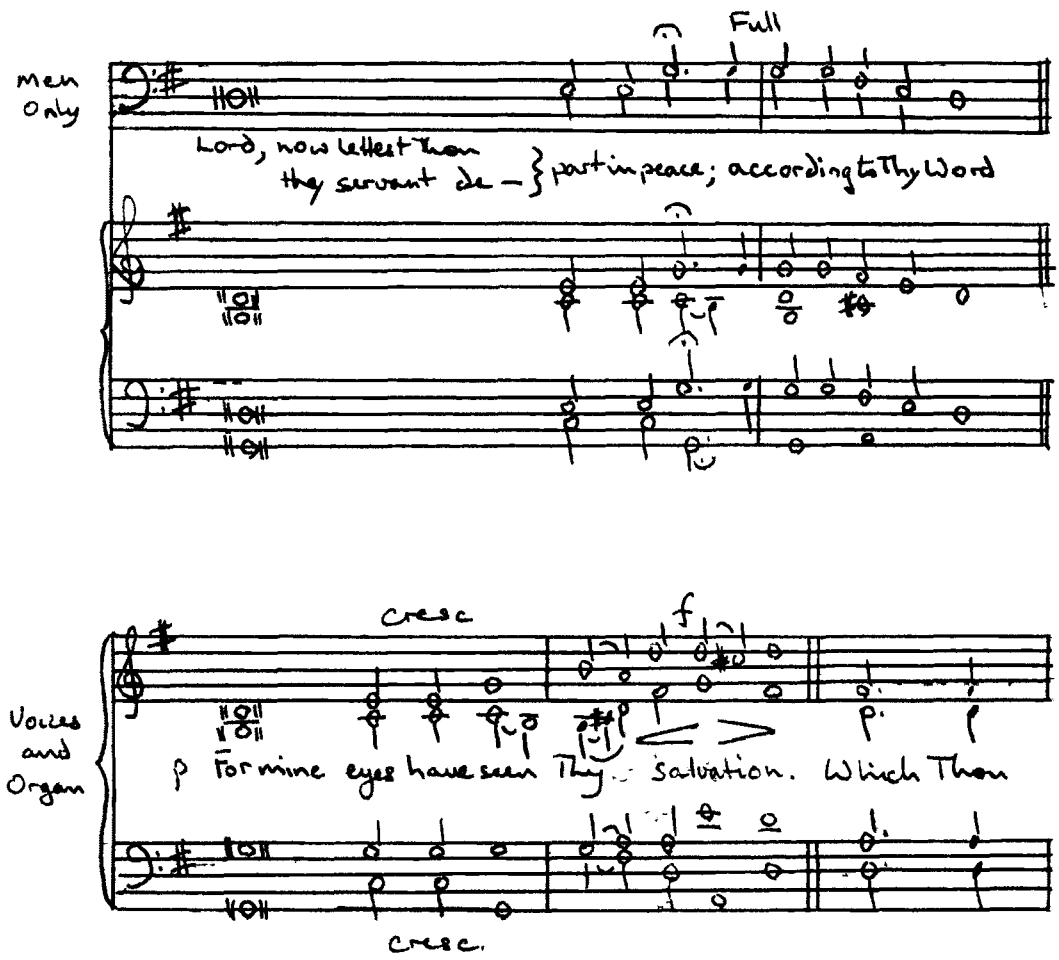
MAGNIFICAT

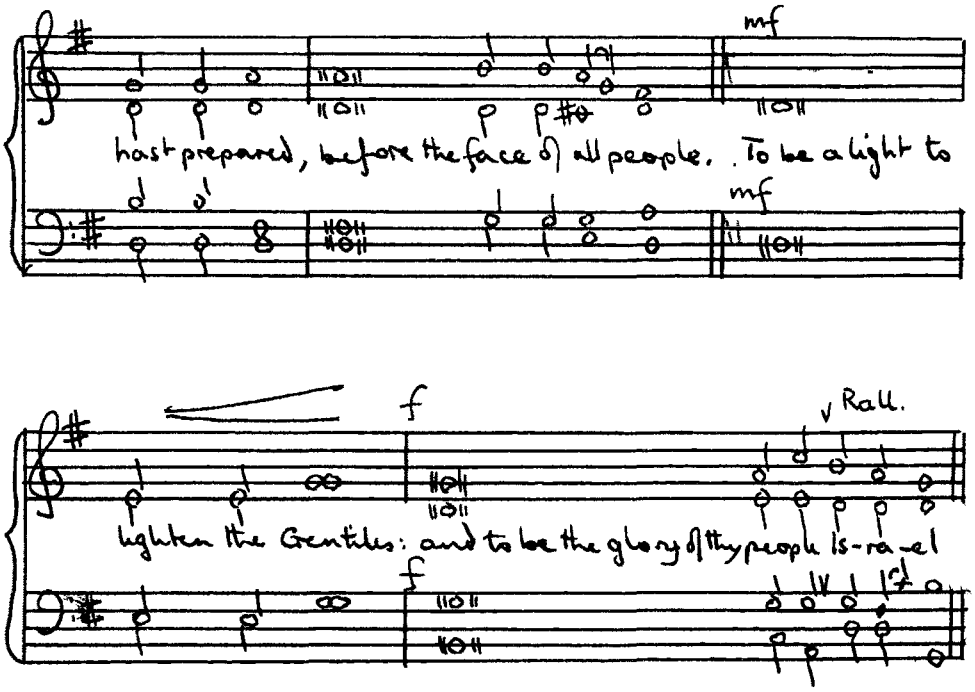



Dec:
p
rall...et...dim.....
For he that is mighty hath magni-fied me; and Holy is His Name
f
p
rall...a...dim...
Treble Voices only.
And His mercy is on them that fear Him, throughout all generations
Mens Voices only
He hath showed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud, in the imagi nations their hearts
Full
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.
Dec:
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.
p
Can:
Rall.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.



Nunc Dimittis




mf
hast prepared, before the face of all people. To be a light to
mf
f
Rall.
lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Is-ra-el
f

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